

THE
DOCTRINE of GRACE:
OR, THE
Office and Operations
OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT
Vindicated from
The Insults of INFIDELITY,
AND
The Abuses of FANATICISM:
CONCLUDING
With some Thoughts
(humbly offered to the consideration of the
ESTABLISHED CLERGY)
With regard to
The right method of defending Religion
against the attacks of either Party.
IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY
WILLIAM Lord Bishop of GLOUCESTER.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N,
Printed for A. MILLAR, and J. and R.
TOWSON, in the Strand. MDCCLXIII.

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DOCTRINE OF GRACE:
ON THE
Office and Operations

OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT



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BY
WILLIAM LINDSAY COLCLOUGH

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A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING THE

OFFICE and OPERATIONS

OF THE

HOLY SPIRIT.

WE COME now to the application of this Sovereign Test, the scourge and confusion of Imposture.

This *Wisdom from above*, of which the Apostle so highly predicates, is, we see, the same as *wisdom revealed* immediately from Heaven; but, descending to Man,

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is adapted to the capacity of his Powers: So that heavenly and earthly wisdom have this in common, to be COMMUNICABLE, that is, TO BE UNDERSTOOD. When therefore we find a pretender to inspiration, such as JACOB BEHMEN, delivering to us, under the Character of the *Wisdom that is from above*, a heap of unmeaning, or, what amounts to the same thing, unintelligible words, we can conceive no other of it than the jargon of the *spirit of infatuation*. Nor will the Apology of his illuminated Disciple (8), in his book called *The Way to divine Knowledge*, at all mend the matter. “When Jacob (says he) like Elijah, “in his FIREY CHARIOT, is caught “up into such heights, and sees and “relates such things as I cannot yet comprehend, I love and reverence him for “being where I never was, and seeing “such things as he cannot make me

(8) Mr. William Law.

“see;

"see; just as I love and reverence St. Paul, &c (9)." The comparison, we see, is honourable; tho' not so opposite as one could wish: For here lies the difference between *Jacob* and *Paul*; The *Rosencrucian* talks largely of what he knew

(9) *The way to DIVINE KNOWLEDGE, &c.* p. 88.
 — Mr. John Wesley indeed, tho' no enemy to these superb Vehicles, speaks very disrespectfully of Jacob's *fiery Chariot*, "I can and must say thus much [of his *Mysterium magnum*] and that with as full evidence, as I can say that two and two make four, it is most sublime nonsense, inimitable bombast, fustian not to be paralleled. *Journal from Sept. 3, 1741. to Oct. 27, 1743*" — Another writer, who had the best means of being well informed, assures us, that this *fiery Chariot*, was not of Jewish but of German construction. "Jac. Böhmii Sutor Görlicensis — Hic cum natura ipsa proclivis esset ad res abditas pervestigandas, et Rob. Fluddii ac Rosæcrucianorum scita cognovisset, Theologiam, igne duce, imaginatione comite invenit, ipsis Pythagoricis numeris et Heracliti notis obscuram — ita enim Chymicis imaginationibus et tantarum rerum confusione et caligine omnia miscet, ut ipse sibi obstrepere videatur." *J. L. Mosheimii Inst. Hist. Eccl. ant. & recent.*

152 *A Discourse concerning*

his reader could not understand; and the *Apostle*, as Master of himself, tho' not of his Subject, more sagely observes a religious silence (10).

Having shewn this *Wisdom* to be in its nature COMMUNICABLE, and so, cut off all the bold pretensions of the *Mystics*, we come to what St. James makes its first and essential quality; *the wisdom from above*, says he, is FIRST, PURE. *πρῶτον μὲν ἀγνή* i. e. *pure*, whether *Carnally* or *Spiritually* understood. Now as Mr. *W. Law* begot METHODISM (1), and Count *Zinzendorf* rocked the Cradle, it may not be improper, first of all, to examine *their* pretensions to this essential quality of heavenly wisdom, *purity*.

(10) ἀρρήτα ῥήματα ἃ ἐκ ἐξὸν ἀνθρώπων λαλῆσαι.
2 Cor. xii. 4. (1) "Meeting with Mr. Law's
" *Christian perfection and serious Call* --- the light
" flowed in so mightily on my soul, that every
" thing appeared in a new View, &c. &c." *Journ.*
from Feb. 1. 1737-8, to his return from Germany,
p. 29.

As purity respects *practice*, the followers of the Count, the *Moravians*, give us little trouble. If we may credit the yet unconfuted relations both in Print and in MS, composed by their own Members, the Participants in their most sacred and mysterious Rites, their practices in the consummation of marriage, are so horribly, so unspeakably flagitious (2), that this People seems to have no more pretence to be put into the number of Christian Sects than the TURLUPINS of the thirteenth Century; a vagabond crew of miscreants, who rambled over Italy, France and Germany, calling themselves the *Brothers and Sisters of the free Spirit*; Who, in speculation, professed that species of Atheism, called

(2) Mr. J. Wesley, in a *melancholy account*, which, he says, he received of these Wretches at *Bedford*, inserts the following particular.---“Mr. Rimius has said nothing to what might have been said concerning their *Marriage Oeconomy*. “I know [saith the informer] a hundred times more than he has written. But the particulars are too shocking to relate. I believe no such things were ever practised before, no not amongst the most barbarous Heathens.” *Journ. from July 20, 1750. to Oct. 28, 1754. P. 74.*

Pantheism;

Pantheism; and, in practice, pretended to be exempted from all the obligations of morality and religion.

The BEHMENISTS, indeed, have not extended the FREEDOM of their *Spirit* thus far; yet the Leader of this sect amongst us, tho' manifesting an exemplary abhorrence of all *carnal impurity*, has fallen into the lowest dreggs of the *Spiritual*; and hath written a large discourse to recommend PANTHEISM, a Doctrine so much enobled by the *Turlupins*, of the thirteenth Century; so learnedly explained by the Cartesian Spinofists, and so politicly concealed by the Chinese Virtuosi: Which teaches, that there is but one universal Substance existing, of which, the Creature and Creator (if, after this, they are to be distinguished) participate in common. The general principles of this unhappy Philosophy, the Reader may find in the note below (3).

(3) "It is the same impossibility for a thing to
"be created *out of* nothing, as to be created *by* no-
"thing. It is no more a part or prerogative of
"God's omnipotence to create a Being out of no-
"thing, than to make a thing to be without any

But

But next to this *impurity* of fanatic *Wisdom* which sets NATURE in the throne of

"one quality of Being, in it.----Every creature is
"nothing else than NATURE put into a certain
"form of existence." *An appeal to all that doubt
or disbelieve the truths of the Gospel*, by W. Law,
M. A. 1742. p. 8.

"That which thinks and wills in the soul, is
"that *very same* unbeginning breath which thought
"and willed in God, before it was breathed into
"the form of a human soul; and therefore it is,
"that Will and Thought cannot be bounded.--The
"essences of the soul were a breath in God before
"they became a living soul, they lived in God be-
"fore they lived in the created soul; and therefore
"the soul is a partaker of the eternity of God, and
"can never cease to be." P. 10.

"The creation of a soul is the bringing the
"powers of thinking and willing out of their eter-
"nal state in the one God, into a beginning state of
"self conscious life, distinct from God. And this
"is God's omnipotent creating ability, that he can
"make the powers of his own nature become crea-
"tural, living personal images of what he is in him-
"self, in a state of DISTINCT PERSONALITY from
"him." P. 12.

"It is no more a property of the divine omnipo-
"tence to be able to annihilate a soul, than to be
"able to make an eternal truth become a fiction of
"yesterday. And to think it a lessening of the
GOD,

GOD, is that other, which separates REASON from GRACE. "It is a point we CHIEF-

"power of God to say, that he cannot annihilate the soul, is as absurd as to say, that it is a lessening of the light of the Sun, if it cannot destroy or darken its own rays of light." R. 17.

"To suppose this or any other MATERIAL world to be made out of nothing, has all the same absurdities in it as the supposing angels and spirits to be created out of nothing. All the qualities of all Beings are eternal. --- All qualities, properties, or whatever can be affirmed of God, are self-existent and necessarily existent. Self and necessary existence is not a particular attribute of God; but is the general nature of every thing that can be affirmed of God. All qualities and properties are self-existent in God. --- It follows undeniably that EVERY CREATED THING must have its whole NATURE from, and out of, the divine nature." P. 23, 24.

"Properly and strictly speaking nothing CAN begin to be. The beginning of every thing is nothing more than its beginning to be in a new state. --- No quality or power of nature then began to be; but such qualities and powers as had been from all eternity began then to be in a new state. As for what fire, light, darkness, air, water, and earth are; They are and can be nothing else but some ETERNAL THINGS, BECOME gross, finite, measurable, divisible, and transitory; For if there

“LY INSIST UPON, (says Mr. J. Wesley
 “ the pillar and ground of *Methodism*) that
 “ orthodoxy or RIGHT OPINION is, at
 “ best, but a very slender part of Religion,
 “ IF ANY PART OF IT AT ALL (3).”
 Here we see REASON is, as it were, discarded
 from the service of RELIGION, and from
 its attendance on GRACE : tho’ one part
 of the office of the holy Spirit be *to lead us*
into all truth. For when Reason is no
 longer employed to distinguish between
right and *wrong* in *Opinions*, Religion
 hath no further connexion with it. And
 what occasion for this it’s service when the
 distinction, we are told, is of so little
 consequence? And yet if we once agree to
separate Reason from Religion, *Piety* will

“ could be a temporal fire that did not spring out of
 “ eternal fire, then there might be time that did
 “ not come out of eternity.” P. 114, 115.

“ Will any one now call these things *whimsical*
 “ *speculations*? Can any thing be thought of, more
 “ WORTHY of God, more CONFORMABLE to
 “ Nature, or more CONSONANT to all revealed Re-
 “ ligion?” P. 118. (3) Mr. J. Wesley’s *Plain*
account &c. P. 4.

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soon degenerate into superstition or fanaticism. But the piety of the first ages was of a different form : It was then the glory of the Gospel to be a *reasonable service*. By this quality it was distinguished from the various modes of Gentile Worship, which entirely consisted in the fanatic Raptures of their Prophets, and the Superstitious Rites of their Priests. Articles of belief or a formula of Faith, they left to those Innovators who had now pretended to bring in *Reason* for the regulation of Religion ; *orthodox or right Opinion being* (on the principles of these antient Masters of the mob) *at best but a very slender part of Religion, if any part of it at all*. On the other hand, St. PAUL considered *right Opinion* as a full third part at least of Religion ; where speaking of the three great supports which the Master-builder, the HOLY SPIRIT, had provided for the Christian-Church, he makes this, of *right opinion*, to be one. *The fruit of the Spirit (says he) is in all* **GOODNESS and RIGHTEOUSNESS and**

TRUTH

TRUTH (4). For by *Goodness* (5) is meant the conduct of Particulars to the Whole; and consists in the exemplary habits of *social* virtue: And this refers to CHRISTIAN PRACTICE. By *righteousness* (6) is meant the conduct of the Whole to Particulars; and consists in that equal gentleness of Government, where Church-Authority is made to coincide with the private rights of Conscience; and this refers to CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE. And, by *Truth* (7) is meant the conduct of the Whole and of Particulars to one another, mutually; and consists in *Orthodoxy* or *right Opinion*; and this refers to CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. So different an Idea had St. Paul of CHRISTIAN RELIGION from what this over zealous man hath been led to entertain of it. No less was the difference, which the first *Reformers* from the errors of Popery, entertained of the FAITH; who, for the sake of *right opinion*, occasioned so many revolutions in *Civil* as well as in *religious*

(4) Eph. V. 9. (5) Ἀγαθότητα. (6) Δικαιοσύνη.
(7) Ἀληθεία.

Systems; the perversity of men turning, as it had before done, the message of *peace* into a *sword* (8). Now, how much had all these to answer for, if *right opinion be at best a slender part of Religion, if any part of it at all.* Without doubt Mr. Wesley, by this declaration, has provided well for the fortune of his own Sect, amongst all denominations of Christians. But what obligations the Church of England (of which he professes himself a member) has unto him for thus shortening the labours of the Popish missionaries he would do well to consider. Such escapes as these, I suppose, they were, which occasioned the reports of his preaching *popery* to his Followers; a calumny of which he bitterly complains. And a calumny it surely is: To do him justice, I believe he has as little regard to the interests of Popery as any of his hearers, and as much to his own: The truth seems to be this. He could not find a better mean of securing the honour of his own pretensions than by this extraordinary declaration. He

(8) Matt. x. 34.

saw the exact resemblance there is in the NEW BIRTH, between his Saints and some of those of the Church of Rome. This might lead reflecting men to conclude, that the Original of both was the same. Yet as the Popish and Protestant opinions, or Articles of faith, are very opposite to one another, the God of truth, (while *truth* was supposed to constitute a principal part of Religion) could never be believed to have any thing to do with the *new birth*, whether popish or protestant. Nothing then was left for those who had deserted *Nature*, but to ascribe both to *Enthusiasm* or *Demonianism*. To avoid this disgrace, Mr. Wesley rather chuses to let Popery share with him in the glory of divine communications, and expressly vouches for the Miracles wrought at the tomb of *Abbe Paris* (9). Now this concession could be no otherwise supported than by inculcating the notion, That errors in Faith have so little to do with Religion, that they are no

(9) Journ. from July 20, 1749. to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 23.

barr or impediment to the highest favours of the holy Spirit. *It is the point (says he) we chiefly insist upon, that Orthodoxy or right opinion is at best but a very slender part of Religion, if any part of it at all.* Great reason likewise had he to INSIST ON THIS POINT, on another account, namely the Character he hath given of his own Saints. "The more, says he, I converse with this People, the more I am amazed. That God hath wrought a great work is manifest. And yet the main of them—are not able to give a rational account of the plainest principles of Religion." Nor is this observation confined to the People. He had made a profelyte of Mr. D. vicar of B. And to shew he was no discredit to his Master, he delivers him to us under this Character.— "He seemed to stagger at nothing; tho' as yet his understanding is not opened (10)." He then attempts at the cause of this strange Phenomenon. "It is plain, God begins his work at the Heart; Then the inspiration of the highest giveth understanding (1)." "

(10) Journ. from July, 20, 1750. to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 11. (1) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746. to July 20, 1750. p. 121.

But

But tho' this solution be in Scripture language, it is neither Scripture doctrine nor history. In the first propagation of Religion, God began with the *understanding*; and rational conviction won the *heart*. When the holy Ghost fell on the Disciples at the day of Pentecost, *the devout men of every nation under heaven* heard them speak in their own tongues. --- But what? Not the jargon of fanaticism; but the *wonderful works of God*, i. e. they heard them give a rational account of the various parts of God's religious Dispensations to Mankind. It was just the same on all other occasions: When the Spirit first fell upon believers, they *prophefied*; that is, they explained the Scriptures of the Prophets. But the dissensions amongst the Corinthians sets this matter in the clearest light, and shews that the first effect of inspiration is to give understanding. Their *understanding* was so enlarged by all spiritual gifts, that the work not having been begun at the *heart*, they abused these advantages to the violation of Charity. But, for this discordancy, between *his* Mission and St. Paul's,

he has a salvo : He observes occasionally, in several places of his journal, that God *now* not only does a *new work*, but by *new ways*. This solution of our spiritual Empiric, will perhaps put the Reader in mind of the Quack in Moliere, who having placed the *liver* on the left side, and the *heart* on the right, and being told that the structure of the parts was certainly otherwise, replied, *Oui, cela étoit autre fois ainsi ; mais nous avons changé tout cela, & nous faisons maintenant la médecine d'une méthode toute nouvelle.* ---But tho' he talks of the *understanding* coming after, this is only to his *babes of grace*, who are to expect it, as children do their play things, at *latter lammas*. This he has plainly enough insinuated in a parallel between the *work* carried on in England and in America. " I now (says he) looked over Mr. Prince's *Christian History*. What an amazing " difference is there in the manner wherein " God has carried on his *work* in England " and in America ! *There*, above an hundred of the established Clergy, men of " age and experience, and of the greatest " note for sense and learning in those parts, " are

“are zealously engaged in the *work*.
 “Here, almost the whole Body of the aged,
 “experienced and learned clergy are zealous
 “lously engaged against it : And few, but
 “a handful of raw young men, engaged in
 “it; without name, learning, or eminent
 “sense! And yet by that large number of
 “honourable men the *work* seldom
 “flourished above six months at a time;
 “and then followed a lamentable and general
 “decay, before the next revival of
 “it : Whereas that which God hath
 “wrought by these despised instruments
 “hath continually increased for fifteen
 “years together (2).” Now what is this
 but to tell us, that the *understanding* has
 nothing, and *will have* nothing, to do in
 the WORK ?

On the whole, therefore, we conclude,
 That that *Wisdom* which divests the Christian
 Faith of it's *Truth*, and the test of
 Truth, *Reason*, and resolves all into internal
 feelings, into spiritual mysticism, and ex-

(2) Journ. from July 20, 1750. to Oct. 28,
 1754. P. 43.

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tatic raptures, instead of giving it the manly support of moral demonstration, That this, I say, can never be *the wisdom which is from above*, whose characteristic attribute is *Purity*.

Thus, on a fair trial, these illuminated Doctors have, at their very first entrance, excluded themselves from their high pretensions: Principles like these always coming from *Spiritual impurity*; and often leading, as we have seen, into the very sink of *moral impurity*.

But now, had it been our good fortune to find the matter otherwise; and that the *Wisdom* enquired after, had rested upon that foundation on which *celestial Wisdom* must necessarily rise, (and this it might well do, tho' it came not immediately from the Fountain head of Purity; as the *unbroken Cisterns* of Holy Writ were amply sufficient to supply these *living waters*) our next business would be to prosecute the inquiry, and to apply the other apostolic marks to these pretending Sectaries.

Of these marks the first only (which has been so amply discuss'd) namely *purity*, respects the *NATURE* of the *Wisdom* from above;

above; or, in other words, the *Doctrines* taught. All the rest, which follow, concern the MANNER of teaching, or the Conduct of the teachers. We are not therefore to stop short in our enquiry, because we may have found that the test of *purity* has answered to the touch: tho' Mr. J. Wesley (who assures us that he preaches nothing but the doctrine of the Church of England) thinks this sufficient to satisfy all reasoning men concerning his conduct. "I simply described (says he) the *plain old Religion of the Church of England*, which is now almost every where spoken against, under the name of METHODISM (3)." If *methodism* be spoken against, those who censure it, could mean neither an *old* nor a *new* Religion, since the word signifies only the *manner of preaching* either one or the other. And, of all men, Mr. Wesley should best know the meaning of the term, since it was not a nickname imposed on the sect by it's enemies, but an appellative of honour bestowed upon it, by themselves.

(3) Journ. from August 12, 1738. to November 1, 1739. P. 90.

If therefore they preach only *the plain old Religion of the Church of England*, they could mean by *methodism*, nothing but the *manner of preaching* it. Why then will Mr. J. Wesley so grossly misrepresent his Adversaries as to say, that when they *speak against Methodism* they *speak against the plain old doctrine of the Church of England*? since he himself has taught them to call *methodism* (and they might well have called it by a harder name) the *manner*, in which he and his followers attempt to propagate this *plain old Religion*.

However, strip him of his prevarication and his sophistry, and we find him plainly enough declaring, That the *manner of preaching*, so it be *truth* which is preached, ought to give no offence. And, to this Purpose, he relates the following conversation: "A serious Clergyman desired
" to know, In what point we differed
" from the Church of England? I answer-
" ed, to the best of my knowledge, in none.
" The Doctrines we preach are the Doc-
" trines of the Church of England. In-
" deed, the fundamental doctrines of the
" Church

“ Church, clearly laid down both in her
“ Prayers, Articles, and Homilies (5).”

But the most holy things may be de-
praved, in passing thro’ impure hands :
and that Truth, which inspires wisdom,
and promotes peace, may, then serve for
nothing but to turn the heads and hearts
of men otherwise reasonable and peaceable.
Indeed, a *fanatic manner* of preaching,
tho’ it were the doctrine of an Apostle, may
do more harm, to Society at least, than a
modest revival of old speculative heresies,
or, than the invention of new; since it
tends to bewilder the imaginations of some,
to inflame the passions of others, and, in
that state of things, to spread disorder and
disturbance throughout the whole Com-
munity. What for instance, does FIELD-
PREACHING imply, but a famine of the
Word, occasioned by a total neglect in the
spiritual Pastors appointed by Law? And
what can it produce, but strong resent-
ments in behalf of the Ministers of Religi-
on, thus injuriously treated? What can be

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738. to Nov. 1,
1739. p. 81.

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the issue of the NEW BIRTH, attended with those infernal throws and frightful agitations so graphically described in the Journals of Mr. J. Wesley, but high ferments in behalf of Religion it self, thus scandalously dishonoured and traduced?

The sacred Writer, who delivered this Test for the trial of these Men's pretensions, was unquestionably in these sentiments, that a fanatic Spirit did more mischief in the *mode* of teaching than in the *matter* taught; since, of half a dozen marks recommended for this purpose, *one* only is applicable to the *doctrine*; all the rest concern the *manners* of the Teacher.

Nay, what is more, we have Mr. J. Wesley himself on our side, where he tells us, that *it is a point he chiefly insists upon, that ORTHODOXY or RIGHT OPINION is, at best, but a very slender part of Religion, if any part of it at all.* The Operation of Religion on the heart therefore, (which with him is the same as on the fancy, and manifests itself in corporeal agitations) is the principal point. But
this

this altogether resolves itself into the manner of propagating the Faith.

Yet still it be may disputed, Who is it that becomes answerable for the disorders occasioned by this *new mode* of propagating Religion? Is it Mr. J. Wesley, or his Adversaries? He, I make no question, will exculpate himself by the direction of St. Paul to Timothy — *to preach the word in season, and out of season*. Which implies, he thinks, that the *manner* can never be amiss, or made chargeable with blame.

But he infers more from the Text than it will bear; and misapplies it, into the bargain. This direction relates to *time* only, which is but one of the many circumstances attending on the *manner of preaching*, and that one, in which the abuse is least material. The application (as we say) is no less faulty. The direction is confined to the state of things *then* existing; when the suffering Church had so few opportunities to preach the word, that all, whether *seasonable* or *unseasonable*, were, with reason to be laid hold on. When the Church was once established, and *fixed*, and *seasonable*

times were appointed for holy offices, then (as every one may see) to fly to the *unseasonable* was factious, and a breach of the discipline of that Church, of which the transgressor professed himself a member. To judge, therefore, of the integrity of Mr. J. Wesley's conduct, we must turn from the directions which St. Paul gives *for his own times*, to those which St. James gives *for all times*.

And this leads us on, in our Enquiry. The wisdom from above (says this Apostle) is *first pure, then PEACEABLE*. — To be PEACEABLE is a leading quality in it's general Character. A Choir of Angels ushered in the Advent of the Son of God, with *peace, good-will towards men* (6). And He himself, on his departure from us, bequeathed it to us, as his dearest legacy: *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you* (7). Now that which the FATHER proclaimed, which the SON bestowed, must needs be the office of the HOLY GHOST to maintain. Whatever *form of godliness*, therefore, hath not this Characteristic mark

(6) Luke. ii. 14.

(7) John xiv. 27.

can never reasonably be deemed of heavenly extraction.

That the propagation of *Methodism* hath occasioned many and great violations of *peace*, Mr. Wesley hath amply shewn in the journalary history of his Adventures.

But as in all contests between party and party, the blame is mutually thrown upon one another, Before we come more directly to adjust the share which may be fairly thrown upon *Methodism*, it may be useful previously to inquire into that *temper which makes for peace*; for we may be reasonably assured, that the fault lieth not in that quarter where such a temper is found. Now our blessed Redeemer, who so earnestly recommends *his peace* to us, hath given us directions how to preserve it — *Be ye therefore wise [φρόνιμοι, PRUDENT] as Serpents, and harmless as Doves* (8).

And he, who gave his Followers no precept, regarding life and manners, which he

(8) Matt. x. 16. So again, *Who is that faithful and wise [φρόνιμος, prudent] Servant?* Matt. xxiv. 45.

did not eminently recommend by his own example, was the most perfect pattern of innocence, under the direction of PRUDENCE; as appears in his dextrous evasions to captious questions of the Jewish Leaders who wanted matter to inflame the people against him (9);

(9) An instance of this consummate *prudence*, managed with divine address, we have in the following adventure recorded by St. Mark.----“ There came
“ to him the chief priests and Scribes, and the
“ Elders, and say unto him, By what authority
“ dost thou these things? and who gave thee this
“ authority? And Jesus answered and said unto
“ them, I will also ask of you one question, and
“ answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John,
“ was it from Heaven, or of Men? answer me.
“ And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If
“ we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why
“ then did ye not believe him? But if we shall
“ say, Of men; they feared the People: For all
“ men counted John that he was a Prophet indeed.
“ And they answered and said unto Jesus, We
“ cannot tell. And Jesus answering, saith unto
“ them, Neither do I tell you, by what authority
“ I do these things.” C. xi. 27, & seq.

A direct answer to this question, apparently reasonable, and urged by those who had authority to exact it, must have immaturely revealed what
in

in his avoiding the People when thus inflamed; and above all, in his declining an-

what the destined Ministry of Jesus made necessary to be kept secret. And yet, to evade the question, in such a manner as was sufficient to satisfy Authority, needed all that divine prudence with which the Author of our Salvation was endowed. He therefore replies, "First answer me this question concerning John." The question was reasonable, considered in the view of an argument *ad hominem*; it was reasonable, from the force it had in it self: For if it should appear, that that question had not been determined in the case of John, it was evident from their own conduct, that the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrim was not violated by any man's declining to answer one of the same import.. Further, the question was reasonable and proper in it self. John publicly professed himself the forerunner of Jesus: So that if it were necessary for the Sanhedrim to come at the true knowledge of the general Case, they should have begun with John. This, the natural order of a judicial proceeding required. Nor would the Chief Priests have been backward to answer it, in either view. But here lay the difficulty; the People were of one opinion concerning John, and the Sanhedrim, of another. This embarras silenced them. And in our Saviour's taking advantage of that circumstance consists the divine dexterity of his exemplary prudence. *Neither do I tell you (says he) by*

untimely

untimely promulgation of his *Messiah-Character*; which would either have occasioned civil commotions, or have endangered his life before he had compleated his ministry. And this *prudence* it was, which so forcibly struck St. Paul, where he says, that the blessed Jesus *abounded towards us in all wisdom and PRUDENCE* (10), σοφία καὶ φρονήσει. Which, as appears by what follows, the Apostle makes to consist in his Master's suiting and adapting the various Revelations of his Will to the peculiar seasons and occasions when the knowlege of it became useful to the furtherance of the Faith. *Having* (says St. Paul) *made known unto us the Mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in*

what authority I do these things: As much as to say, "Both on my principles and on your own, a previous question is first to be resolved, namely, concerning the baptism of John. When you have answered this, then comes my time to answer yours: But till then, you have no right to insist upon it." (10) Eph. i. 8.

one, all things in Christ, &c. By which the Apostle seems principally to have in mind that obscure and backward intimation, which, for some time, kept hid from his disciples this *mystery of his will*; the usual title given by the sacred Writers to the calling in of the Gentiles into the Church of Christ. The *prudence* of which conduct is obvious. The Gospel was to be offered first to the Jews. But their reception of it was so unkind, that, had the Apostles been at first acquainted with this *Mystery*, they had been tempted to turn to the Gentiles before the mission to the Jews had been fairly compleated. When that was accomplished, the *mystery* was revealed, in all it's splendor, to St. Peter.

On the whole, therefore, we see, that the PEACEFUL CHARACTER is that, where INNOCENCE IS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF PRUDENCE. Emancipated from this direction, *Innocence* becomes a prey both to it self and to others; and is, either actively or passively, the perpetual source of Discord.

Let

Let us see, now, the regard our new Missionaries *profess to pay* to this precept and example of their Master. HUMAN PRUDENCE has, some how or other, so highly offended, Mr. J. Wesley, that he scruples not to call it, the MYSTERY OF INIQUITY and the OFFSPRING OF HELL.—“I believe” (says he) it pleased God to bless the first Sermon most, because it gave most offence, being indeed an open defiance of that *mystery of Iniquity* which the world calls PRUDENCE (1).” As he here informs us, who gave it that Name, one might be apt to suppose he meant the *prudence* of the *unjust Steward*, which is indeed the *mystery of Iniquity*, did not he himself forbid us to understand it in that sense, by fairly telling us that he meant, what the *World* calls *Christian prudence*. And, as bad as the *World* is, I think it never called the *prudence* of the *unjust Steward* by that name.—“God deliver me, and all that seek him in sincerity from what the *World* calls CHRISTIAN PRU-

(1) *Journ. from Feb. 1. 1737-8. to his return from Germany, p. 12.*

“ DENCE (2).” And again, to a friend who approved not of his *field-preaching*,
 “ —I fear that *offspring of Hell*, worldly or mystic PRUDENCE, hath drawn you away from the simplicity of the Gospel (3).” If his aversion to *prudence* be thus great, his enmity to those amongst whom it is usually found can scarce be thought less, from the hard words he gives whenever he speaks of them. —“ Mrs. Baddiley (says he) desired me to go up to her Son, who had been out of order for some days. For a year or two he was a pattern to all the family, till he began to converse more with GOOD SORT OF MEN. He then grew cooler and cooler in the ways of God, and in a few months quitted the Society (4).” —“ It is absolutely needful for such a one as me to follow the wise advise of Mr. Herbert. — And this I blefs God I can, in some measure, do, while I avoid that BANE OF ALL RELIGION, the Company of GOOD SORT

(2) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738. to Nov. 1. 1739. p. 13. (3) Ibid. p. 56, 57. (4) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746. to July 20, 1750. p. 31.

"OF MEN, as they are called, Persons
 "who have a liking to, but no SENSE of,
 "Religion." [i. e. no extatic feelings or
 the pains of the *new birth*, &c.] "But
 "these insensibly undermine all my re-
 "solution, and steal away what little
 "ZEAL I have (5)." i. e. persuade him
 to be peaceable.

And again, speaking of one of his back-
 sliders, he says --- "but indulging himself
 in HARMLESS COMPANY he first made
 shipwreck of his ZEAL, and then of his
 FAITH (6)." In this I think he is right.
 The Zeal and the Faith of a FANATIC are
 such exact tallies to one another that I have
 no conception how either can exist alone:
 They came into the world together to dis-
 turb Society and dishonour Religion; and
 they must go out together before the one
 can regain its peace, or the other its dig-
 nity.

On the whole, we find, that Mr. J.
 Wesley is, by his own confession, entirely

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1.
 1739, p. 31. (6) Journ. from his embarking for
 Georgia, to his return to London. p. 41.

the HOLY SPIRIT. 181

destitute of that temper *which makes for peace*: if therefore his preaching be attended with tumults and disorders, we cannot but ascribe it to the want of that quality, which the Founders of our holy Religion made essential to the successful propagation of the *Gospel of Peace*, namely, PRUDENCE. It is true, Mr. Wesley, as we have seen, throws the whole fault upon the DEVIL; and this he may be allowed to do in the sense that every paultry Convict charges his pilfering and his Sabbath-breaking on the old Tempter. But if we seek for the more immediate cause, we shall find it much nearer hand. The roman Satirist pretended,

—Nullum Numen abest, si sit PRUDENTIA,

Where PRUDENCE governs, no God is wanting to keep the world in order. We may say, with more sobriety and truth, that where IMPRUDENCE takes the lead, there needs no *Devil* to throw it into confusion. What, for instance, more strongly tends to tumult and disorder than for one who professes to propagate only the *plain old Re-*

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ligion of the Church of England, to set at nought its established Discipline, by invading the province of the parochial Minister; by assembling in undue places and at unfit times; by *speaking evil of Dignities*, in scurrilous invectives against the Governors and Pastors of the national Church? Insolencies of this nature provoke warm and ill-instructed men to demand justice on the offenders: Which not being at hand, (as the interests of Society will not, always, permit the Magistrate to enforce it, where the insults on his office are covered with the pretences of Religion), Particulars are but too apt to seek that in a tumultuary and criminal way, which all the providence of Government, and all the equity of Law, are but barely sufficient to adjust, with such discretion, as, that while the dignity of the State is vindicated, the rights of Religion are not infringed.

Nor will that fanatic Apology, which is ever at hand, be any excuse for them in the commission of their disorders; namely, "That the violation of peace amongst

men serves to advance the *peace* of God; our blessed Master having himself declared, that *he was not come to send Peace upon earth, but a Sword.*" Now the same Spirit which disposes them to apply to their own case all those declarations concerning the first extraordinary state of the Gospel, hinders them from seeing, that these words of Jesus respect only the accidental and transient struggle of the then expiring Powers of darkness; but that the heavenly Proclamation of *peace towards men*, declares the genuine and constant fruits of *God's good will to his Creatures*: that the *first* only predicted the early fortunes of a suffering Church; and that the *other* described the essential nature, the eternal genius, of an all-beneficent Religion. But Enthusiasts, hurried on by the rapid fervours of an inflamed fancy, lose sight of a Christian land, and a believing Magistrate; and have nothing before their eyes but a Country of Pagans and Idolaters, with the Princes of this world risen up to suppress and persecute the *Word of life*. Under these delusions, it is no wonder

that they despise order, insult Government, and set their Rulers at defiance.

But PEACE is the cure of Fanaticism, as Fanaticism is the bane of *Peace*. Sectaries must always kick or be kicked. They must themselves persecute, or they must provoke persecution. To live in this turbulent state is living in their proper element.

As every *Libertine* aspires to be on the *laughing* side, so every *Zealot* would willingly be on the *persecuting*. But Zealots, as well as other Adventurers, must take their chance in this world, whatsoever provision they have made for the other. We see METHODISM, at present, under a well established, watchful government, where it is obliged to wear a less audacious look. To know it's true character, and native disposition, we should see it in all it's fortunes. And this our own Country, productive of very strange things, hath given us ample means to contemplate. For They, who now go under the name of METHODISTS, were, in the days of our Fore-fathers, called PRECISIANS; terms of similar and almost equal import; and being
of

of their own devising, shew how much the same spirit actuated them at all times. The *elder Methodism*, on its first appearance, put on the same suffering exterior, which we see the younger Brother wear at present. During the firm administration of Elizabeth it disguised, and but barely disguised, its native ferocity in a feigned submission; after having invited persecution with the air of a persecutor. Those times, we may be sure, would not suffer it to wait long for what it wanted. And then, as a precious Metal, which had undergone its trial in the fire, and left all its dross behind, the Sect, with great propriety, changed its name, from *Precisian* to PURITAN. But in the weak and distracted times of Charles the Ist, it ventured to throw off the mask; and, then, under the new name of INDEPENDENT, became the chief Agent of all the dreadful disorders which terminated that unhappy reign. For INDEPENDENCY was a name as well suited to the weakness of that Government, which it defied and overturned, as METHODISM is to the strength

of This, of which it stands in awe. Nor is this Pedigree, which makes *Methodism* of the younger House to *Independency*, invented, like heraldic fictions, to enoble my Subject. Whoever reads the large accounts of the *Spiritual state of the Regicides* while under condemnation (written and published, at that time, by their friends, to make them pass, with the People, for Saints and Martyrs) and compares them with the circumstantial Journals of the *Methodists*, will find so exact a conformity in the frenzy of sentiment, and even in the cant of expression, upon the subjects of Faith, Grace, Redemption, Regeneration, Justification, &c. as may fully satisfy him, that they are both of the same Stock; and ready, on a return of the like season, to produce the same fruits. All the difference, which distance of times and variety of circumstances have effected, being only this: The *Methodist* is now, an *Apostolic Independent*; and the Independent was then, *Mahometan Methodist*.

Indeed, it has been Mr. J. Wesley's mishap, with every other requisite of a skil-

ful Leader, to fall upon times very unpropitious to the fortunes of a new Sect.

He found a Government whose equity abhorred Persecution for Religion; and whose firmness, on the other hand, would not suffer it's principles of Toleration to be abused, to the disturbance of Society. Here was little room for the exertion of that quality by which a Sectary may be properly said to exist, namely, ZEAL active or passive. He wanted to be persecuted; but Persecution would not come at his call. Yet, it must be owned, he used every extraordinary method to provoke it: The time was past when it could be said of this *Demon*, as of the less mischievous ones of old, "Vocatus, aut non vocatus, audit." The advantages of *persecution* to a new Sect, Mr. J. Wesley is not at all shy in confessing.—"About one, I preached at Holton, where likewise all is now calm, after a violent storm of several weeks, wherein many were beaten and wounded, and outraged various ways; but NONE MOVED from their *steadfastness*. In the evening I preached at Armley,

"to many who want a storm, being quite
 "UNNERVED by constant Sunshine (7)."
 It is the same conscious want which makes
 him complain of ill treatment; and yet be
 dissatisfied with good — "We came to
 "St. Ives before morning prayers, and
 "walked to Church without so much as
 "one huzza. How strangely has one
 "year changed the scene in Cornwall!
 "This is now a peaceable, nay honoura-
 "ble station. They give us good words
 "in almost every place. *What have*
 "*we done, that the world should be so*
 "*civil to us (8) ?*"

Is not this the language of a man whom
 nothing can please, when he is defeated
 in a secret purpose, which he is ashamed
 to own? He languished, we see, for good
 WHOLESOME SEVERITIES. Many (as
 he well expresses it) *wanted a storm, being*
quite UNNERVED by constant Sunshine. To
 supply this want, which the Magistrate so
 cruelly denied, he is forced to make the
 best of those mock persecutions, the *Drums*

(7) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746. to July 20,
 1750. p. 88. (8) Journ. *ibid.* p. 31.

and *Huzzas* of the Mob. And so bloody always are his ideas, by a constant meditation on this subject, that, speaking of the misnomers of the Grand Jury of Cork, in their presentment of his Brother, and half a score more itinerant Preachers, as vagrants and persons of ill fame, &c. he thus expresses himself—"the names (only "most of them *miserably mangled and murdered*) were designed for the names of "eight Preachers, &c (9)."

The future Martyrologist whom favourable Destiny has appointed to collect together the Saints and Martyrs of this afflicted Church, will, if he be wise, never suffer himself to be misled into a belief that this *mangling and murdering* can refer to *names*; or indeed to any thing else but to an *Irish Massacre*, charitably disguised, by our meek Apostle, under a deformity, not to say; a figure of Speech. To give these *Persecutions* all the *relief* in his power, he expatiates on every adventure with such circumstance, that there is hardly a turnip-

(9) Journ. from July 20, 1749. to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 4.

top ever thrown at his sacred pate, which has not had the honour of being recorded. But this is for Posterity: Something more was to be done for the sake of the Brethren. This small pittance of *persecution*, poor as it is, must be turned to use, while time served, lest, like a flame of straw, it should go out as soon as it was put into a blaze. He therefore contrives to keep *persecution* alive by *prosecuting* his *Persecutors*: And, to make his revenge the sweeter, he does it on the *toleration act*; the Law which did him so much mischief, in depriving him of a real *persecution*. This he notably turns against itself, and makes it an Instrument to support and keep up a shadowy *Persecution*, in the Routs and Revels of the Mob.

Of this contrivance, and of the success of his contrivance, he has given us many curious examples in his Apostolic Journals. Abundantly sufficient to evince, that tho' he who prosecutes, breaks the Peace, yet as he is but the tool and Instrument of him who invites and provokes *persecution*,

persecution, the crime finally comes home to him who set the Rioter on work.

II. The next mark of celestial wisdom is, it's being GENTLE AND EASY TO BE INTREATED. That is, neither a rigid reprover of the indifferent manners of others, nor obstinately tenacious of it's own : but, as far as Truth and Honesty will permit, compliant and even obsequious to all men. The great Apostle of the Gentiles fully approves his pretensions to this *wisdom*, in the account he gives of his conduct, *in becoming all things to all Men that he might gain some* (10). For the truth of which, he appeals to those who were best acquainted with his life and conversation. But amongst our modern Apostles the Scene is shifted. We find them severe condemners of those innocent manners of their fellow citizens, which they themselves have abstained from, on pretence of their being less profitable and edifying; or, perhaps, obstructive of that perfection which they pretend to aim at. Nor are they less severe

(10) 1 Cor. ix. 22.

exactors of conformity to their own observances.

They tell us what we are to expect, in the very appellation they assume. For METHODISM implies a set of manners, squared out by the rule and compass; and, when made a name of distinction, it declares those manners are to be strictly and invariably observed, as the sacred badge of the Brotherhood. Hence Mr. J. Wesley in a letter *to the Church of God at Hernbuth in Upper Lusatia*, having reproved them for teaching, "that it does
 " imply *Liberty* to conform to the world
 " by talking on useless, if not trifling
 " subjects, by joining in worldly diversions, *in order to do good*," They answer, "We believe it much better to
 " discourse out of the news papers,
 " than to chatter about holy things to
 " no purpose." To which he replies, "Perhaps so. But what is this to the
 " point? I believe both one and the other
 " to be useless, and therefore AN ABO-
 " MINATION TO THE LORD (1)." Now

(1) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739. to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 103.

what

what is this but to *withstand St. Paul to his face*, to condemn his conduct in the most uncivil manner, and, as the French say, *rompre en Visiere*. Nay he pushed his *Methodism* so far, as to come to a solemn resolution, *never to LAUGH*; and, to guard himself against the approaches of this paltry infirmity, *never to speak a tittle of worldly things*. And certainly, he who carries his dissociability to this extreme, is in no danger of being EASILY INTREATED. He was now fit company only for the Devil; (with whom, as we have seen, he had a great deal to transact) indeed not for him neither, till the more sociable Fiend had a little relaxed his muscles: For the first trick Satan played him, after they grew acquainted, was, as he himself tells us, to make him burst out into an *immoderate fit of Laughter* (2). But he was ready, to *tear himself to pieces* for this frailty.

His GENTLENESS, by this time, may be easily guess'd at: But he saves us the trouble.

(2) See p. 122 of this Discourse.

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[We understand it fully, by the language, in which he paints his Opposers. He met with one of these in a violent storm at Sea. Yet the common danger of this dreadful hour, could not abate the more violent tempest in his mind — “For who should be there (says he) but the famous Mr. Gr—— of Carnorvanshire. A clumsy, overgrown, hardfaced man; whose countenance I could only compare to that (which I saw in Drury Lane, thirty years ago) of one of the *Russians in Macbeth* (4). — “I walked over (says he) to Egham, where Mr. —— preached one of the most miserable sermons I ever heard: Stuff’d so full of dull, senseless, improbable lies of those he complimented with the title of false Prophets (5).” — “At St. Ives we were saluted, as usual, with a Huzza, and a few stones or pieces of dirt;” that is, I suppose, with stones as soft as dirt. Yet, for want of a better, he has dignified even

(4) Journ. from July 20, 1749. to Oct. 30 1751. p. 31. (5) Journ. from Sept, 3, 1741. to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 88.

this with the name of a *Persecution*: “The
“*Persecution* here (says he) was owing in
“great measure to the indefatigable la-
“bours of Mr. *Hoblin* and Mr. *Simmons*:
“Gentlemen worthy to be had in everlast-
“ing remembrance for their unwearied
“endeavours to destroy Heresy.

“*Fortunati ambo ! Siquid mea pagina*
“*possit,*

“*Nulla dies unquam memori vos ex-*
“*imet ævo (6).*”

Here he tells us, without disguise, that
it is his professed purpose to gibbet up the
Names of his two Persecutors to everlasting
Infamy. While, by the most unregenerate
malice in the world, he dips his curses in
the gall of irony, and, that they may
strike the deeper, flecthes them with a pro-
phane classical parody.

Yet this is the man who says,—“God
“forbid that I should *RAVE*, at a Turk,
“Infidel, or Heretic. I would point out
“their Errors, and, I trust, in the SPIRIT

(6) Journ. from Oct. 17, 1743. to Nov. 17,
1746. p. 22.

"OF MEEKNESS(7)." Yea, *this* SPIRIT was so strong in him, that he blesses God for his goodness, in directing all temptations to fall on this *side*; which, tho' it may be called his *blind side*, (as he always winks at his injuries; sometimes, indeed, to take the better aim) he assures us, is not his *weak side*--- "I cannot but stand amazed
 "at the goodness of God. Others are
 "most assaulted on the *weak side* of their
 "Soul. But with me it is quite otherwise.
 "If I have any strength at all, IT IS IN
 "FORGIVING INJURIES. And on this
 "very side am I assaulted more frequent-
 "ly than any other (8)." By which, with uncommon modesty, he would insinuate that tho' his *persecutions* abound, yet his *forgiveness*, in the Spirit of meekness, does much more abound.

St. Paul and St. James may be reconciled. But he is a bold man who will undertake to reconcile St. Paul and Mr. Wesley. The Reader, perhaps, will be better employed in turning his attention to *ancient*

(7) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1730. to Sept. 3. 1741. P. 112. (8) Journ. from July, 20, 1750. to Oct. 28, 1754. P. 39.

and

and modern SAINTSHIP, at large : Where, in a general view, he will see God's grace in the First, and, in the Second, Man's nature severally asserting their Rights throughout the whole progress. The genial Spirit of God could breathe nothing but *Gentleness and ease to be intreated*. The pestilent heat of Enthusiasm could produce nothing but rigour and obstinacy. For this, being a mere inflammation of the Mind, raises a tumour, whose symptoms are an unyielding stiffness, and impatience under the probe. The Heaven-struck Heart is affected like the purer metals, which easily soften, and speedily run at the touch of the ethereal Ray. But the Fanatic Spirit, self-heated by his own fire nature, retains the property of his congenial Earth, which grows harder and more intractable as it burns.

To proceed. St. James, in his account of celestial *Wisdom*, advances from grace to grace. It is *peaceable* : This is it's lowest quality. It is *Gentle and Easy to be intreated* : This is a further advance in it's Character. The first only implies the not

giving disturbance or offence to our Brother ; but the second declares a readiness to consult his ease and satisfaction. The Apostle's next recommendation of this wisdom rises still higher : It is, he says, **FULL OF MERCY AND GOOD FRUITS.** It would have been a poor account of the *Wisdom from above*, that it amounted only to an obsequious gentleness of Manners : A disposition of heart little more than the shadow or out-line of *Benevolence* ; that harmony of the affections, which the Christian Faith calls **CHARITY** ; and which the Apostle, by a beautiful periphrasis, terms, the being *full of mercy and good fruits.*

III. Let us enquire then into the **MERCY** and **GOOD FRUITS** of modern illumination. The *mercy* of the Sufferer is *forgiveness* ; The *mercy* of the Inflicter is *forbearance.*

Of Mr. Wesley's *forgiveness* under sufferings, we have seen many examples in the Language he gives his Opposers, who pass with him under no other title than that of the *Devil's Servants* and the *Devil's Children.* Of his *forbearance*, when compleatly armed with the

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the Vengeance of Heaven, we have seen many more, in his dispatching the Principal of these *Children of the Devil* without mercy, to their *Father*. For one sure mark of the hypocondriac spirit under a fanatic ferment, is the readiness to dispense, and the rashness to fling about, the exterminating Judgments of God. And when an Enthusiast often calls down fire from Heaven, the least of his concern is his being heard. So that every disaster, befalling his Opposers, is considered by him as God's *owning the cause*, and he would esteem it ingratitude to his master to give it any other name than that of a JUDGMENT; just as *Witches*, when a mischief happens to those whom they have often cursed, ascribe it to the Avenger of their quarrels, their trusty Coadjutor the Devil. For under the agitations of *wrath* and *revenge*, the *fruits of this Spirit* are much the same, whether Heaven or Hell be called to their assistance. But it would be greatly for the credit of these new Saints to distinguish between RAGE and ZEAL, Were they not too proud to learn, or too

perfect to improve, the Psalmist would instruct them in this distinction. He, in his ZEAL against impiety, says, *I hate them, O God! that hate thee: I count them mine Enemies* (1): The consequence of which was, he avoided their ways. THEY, in their rage against opposition cry out--- *Thou hatest them that hate me; Thou countest them thine enemies*: the consequence of which is, to doom them to perdition. Do I wrong these Men? See what has been said above of this matter; and if that does not suffice, turn again to Mr. J. Wesley's *Journals*. "Wednesday 15. I went to Bedlam at the repeated request of Mr. S. who had been confined there above two years. This was the Person, who, while he was speaking against my Brother and me, to the Society at Kingwood, was in a moment struck raving mad. But, it seems, God is at length intreated for him, and has restored him to a sound mind (2)." Again "One J---n H---n a weaver--- zealous for the

(1) Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22. (2) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743. to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 33.

" Church and against Dissenters of every
 " denomination--- He laboured much to
 " convince his acquaintance that the *strange*
 " *fits, into which people at the Societies fell,*
 " was a delusion of the Devil. We were
 " going home when one met us in the
 " street, and informed us, That J--n H--n
 " was fallen *raving mad*----Between one
 " and two I came in and found him on
 " the floor, the room being full of people,
 " whom his wife would have kept out,
 " but he cried aloud, No, let the world
 " see the *just Judgment of God*. Two or
 " three men were holding him as well
 " as they could. He immediately fixed his
 " eyes upon me, and stretching out his
 " hands cried, Oh ! this is he who, I said,
 " was a deceiver of the People. But
 " *God has overtaken me (3).*" And again,
 " I was informed of an *awful providence,*
 " A poor wretch who was here the last
 " week cursing, blaspheming, and labour-
 " ing with all his might to hinder the
 " *word of God*, had afterwards boasted

(3) Journ. from August 12, 1738. to November
 1, 1739. p. 44.

"to many, that he would come again on
 "Sunday, and no man should stop his
 "mouth then. But on Friday God laid
 "his hand upon him, and on Sunday he
 "was buried (4). I saw a poor man, (once
 "joined with us,) who wanted nothing in
 "this world, but the peace the world
 "cannot give. A day or two before,
 "He hanged himself, but was cut down
 "before he was dead. He has been cry-
 "ing out ever since, *God had left him,*
 "*because he had left the Children of God* (5).
 But he is inexorable to all who apostat-
 ize.----" I buried the body of Lucy God-
 "shall----after pressing toward the mark
 "for more than two years--- *She became*
 "*weary and faint---I put her out of the*
 "*band,---God blessed this to her soul.*"--
 "But how---She fell down on her knees,
 "and delivered up her soul and body into
 "the hands of God. In the instant the
 "use of all her limbs was taken away,
 "and she was in a burning fever.---She

(4) Journ. Nov. 1, 1739. to Sept. 3, 1741.
 p. 59, 60. (5) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743,
 to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 91.

"cried out on Satan---was in darkness---
 "was in *light*---closed her eyes and
 "died (6)."--- I was pressed to visit Nicho-
 "las Palmer, one who had *separated from*
 "us, and behaved with a great *bitterness*,
 "till God laid his hand upon him. He
 "had sent for me several times, saying he
 "could not die in peace till he had seen
 "me.---We wrestled with God in his be-
 "half--- his soul was comforted; and a
 "few hours after quietly fell asleep (7)."

Their GOOD FRUITS come next to be
 considered. Mr J. Wesley's idea of *true Re-*
ligion doth not promise much. He saith,
 "It doth not consist in any or all these
 "three things, *the living harmless,--- using*
 "*the means of Grace---and doing much*
 "*good.* A man, he says, may do all this,
 "and yet have *no true Religion at all* (8)."

Yet St. JAMES talks another language.
Pure Religion (and, I suppose, *pure and true*
differ only in sound) and undefiled before
God and the Father, is this, to visit the sa-

(6) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741. to Oct. 27, 1743.

P. 71. (7) Journ. Ibid. p. 5. (8) Journ. from
 Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741, p. 11, 12.

therless

fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World (9).

Now, what is *visiting the fatherless and widows* but *the doing much good*? And what is *keeping one's self unspotted from the world*, but *using the means of Grace*? In what a fearful taking then, must Mr. Wesley's Zealots be, who, misled by the Bible, have so long mistaken *true Religion*? The least it will do is to drive them to *despair*. But this is the very state in which their master delights to take them up. And his assurance, that *true Religion consists in God's dwelling and reigning in the Soul* (10), soon makes way for a happier madness: The Jaws of Hell begin to close, the Gates of Heaven to open. But what the overlaboured imagination suffered, during the course of this operation, requires the hand of a Master to describe. I shall give it therefore in Mr. J. Wesley's own words: and as these his spiritual cures, (which he reports with the exactness of an Hippocrates or a

(9) St. James, c. i. ver. 27.

(10) P. 17. ut sup.

Sidenham

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Sidenham) are all the GOOD FRUITS he pretends to boast of, he will not be displeased to have a few of the choicest of them set in a fair light.

The condition of his Audience, on his first operation upon them, is thus graphically described --- "I preached in an open place, two or three miles from Newcastle. The wind was high and extremely sharp : but I saw none go away till I went. Yet I observed none seemed to be much convinced : only "STUNN'D, AS IF CUT IN THE HEAD(1)." This was in order. They were first to be *stunn'd*; Reason was to be extinguished before he could set fire to their Imaginations. But he brings them to their senses with a vengeance. "I felt the fire of Hell already kindled in my breast (says one) and all my body was in as much pain as if I had been in a burning firey furnace (2)." --- "I was interrupted (says he) by the cries of one who was *pricked at the heart*." One of those I

(1) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743, p. 82. (2) *ib.* p. 83.

suppose, who had before been *cut in the head*:
 And having now got possession both of the
head and heart, the game begins.--“ Another
 “ person drop’d down--- a little boy near
 “ him was seized in the same manner.
 “ A young man who stood behind, fixed
 “ his eyes on him, and sunk down him-
 “ self as one dead. But soon began to
 “ roar out and beat himself on the ground,
 “ so that six men could scarcely hold him.
 “---Mean while many others began to cry
 “ out to the Saviour of all, that he would
 “ come and help them, insomuch that all
 “ the house and indeed all the street for
 “ some space, was in an uproar.--I was call-
 “ ed after supper to one who feeling in her
 “ self such a Conviction as she had never
 “ known before, had run out of the So-
 “ ciety in all haste *that she might not expose*
 “ *herself*. But the hand of God followed
 “ her still, &c (3).” This fear of *exposing*
herself Mr. J. Wesley, we see, takes much
 amiss. He expresses himself with some

(3) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1.
 1739, P. 59, 51.

resentment

resentment but more contempt of her delicacy. Yet it seems hard that he would not suffer the young Woman to understand the nature of *her own feelings*, and consequently to be the best judge of the danger she was in, of *exposing herself*.---

"Forty or Fifty of those who were seeking salvation desired leave to spend the night together in the society room. Before ten, I left them and laid down."---

For our Engineer had so amply provided them with combustibles, and so fitly laid his train, that he knew they would take fire of themselves. He was not disappointed.—"Between two and three in the morning he was awaked, and desired to come down stairs. I immediately (says he) heard such a confused noise, as if a number of men were all putting to the Sword. It increased, when I came into the room, and began to pray, &c (6)"---
 "Thence I went to a poor woman who had been long in *despair*. I was glad to meet with Mrs. R. there; the person

(6) Journ. from Nov. 1. 1739. to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 51, 52.

" mentioned in Mr. Whitefield's Jour-
 " nal, who after *three years madness* (8)
 " CALLED) was so deeply convinced of Sin
 " &c. (7)—" Another of Dr. Monro's pati-
 " ents came to desire my advice; I found no
 " reason to believe she had been other-wise
 " *mad* than every one is who is deeply
 " convinced of Sin (8)."—A middle aged
 " woman desired me to return thanks for
 " her to God; who, as many witnesses
 " then present testified, was a day or two
 " before really *distracted*, and, as such,
 " *tied down in her bed*. But upon prayer
 " made for her, she was instantly relieved
 " and restored to a sound mind (9)."—
 " *I could not but be under some concern* with
 " regard to one or two persons, who were
 " tormented in an unaccountable manner,
 " and seemed to be indeed *Lunatics*, as
 " well as fore vexed (10)." Here, for the
 first time, Humanity seems to have re-
 covered a little of it's rights, amidst these
 scenes of horror. Mr. J. WESLEY himself
 confesses, *he could not but be under some con-*

(7) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738. to Nov. 1.
 1739, p. 80. (8) Ibid. p. 83. (9) Ibid. p. 4.
 (10) Ibid, p. 88.

cern. But invigorated by the *new birth* he soon shakes off the *old man's* slough, *human pity*, and makes a joke even of the very *Lunacy*, he had pretended to lament. "Two or three who were at the Devanden (a high hill two or three miles from Chepstow) *are gone quite distracted*, i. e. they mourn and refuse to be comforted till they have "Redemption &c (1)." — I desired one who had seen affliction herself to go and visit Mrs. G — in *Bedlam* (put there by her husband as a *mad woman*) where "it pleased God greatly to knit their hearts together, and with his comforts to refresh their souls (2)." — "Amongst the hearers was one, who sometime before had been deeply convinced of her ungodliness, insomuch that she cried out day and night, *Lord save or I perish*. All the neighbours agreeing that she was *stark mad*, her husband put her into a Physician's hands, who blooded her largely and laid on several blisters. But all this proving without success she was

(1) Ibid. p. 90. (2) Journ. from Nov. 1. 1739. to Sept. 3. 1741. p. 54.

“in a short time judged to be *incurable*. When Mrs. Johnson came, she soon saw the nature of the disease, having herself *gone thro’* the same. She ordered all the medicines to be thrown away, and exhorted the Patient to *look unto Jesus* (3).”

And with this spiritual *madness* he is so enamoured, that he calls it, when at it’s height, *a glorious time*. “I preached at Weaver’s Hall. IT WAS A GLORIOUS TIME. Several drop’d to the ground, as if struck with lightening &c. &c (4).” And where this is wanting, tho’ every thing else be to his wish, he is so dissatisfied, that it is as much as ever his submission to the divine Will can obtain, *to let God do as seemeth him good*.---“I saw none of that TRIUMPH OF FAITH, which has been so COMMON in other places. But the Believers go on *calm and steady*.---“Let God do as seemeth him good (5).”

(3) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741. to Oct. 27. 1743. p. 53. (4) Journ. *ibid.* p. 27. (5) Journ. *ibid.* p. 78.

But

But though Mr. J. Wesley does so well in this new trade of *turning fools into mad-men*, yet his Craft's-Master is certainly one Mr. Wh--y, of whom the former gives this extraordinary account. "A poor woman gave me an account of what I think ought never to be forgotten." --- Truly, I think so too.--- "It was four years, she said, since her Son Peter Shaw, then nineteen or twenty years old, by hearing a Sermon of Mr Wh--y fell into great uneasiness. She thought he was ill, and would have sent for a Physician. But he said, No, no, send for Mr. Wh--y. He was sent for, and came; and, after asking a few questions, told her, *The Boy is mad*, get a coach and carry him to Dr. M——, *use my name*; *I have sent several such to him* (6).--- Who this Mr. Wh--y is, or what he is, I know not. But, we see, he sends his people to Monro, with the same unconcern in search of lost brains, that one would enquire of Sir J. Fielding after a lost portmanteau.

(6) Journ. from Nov. 1. 1739. to Sept. 3. 1741, p. 56.

These

242 *A Discourse concerning*

These are the exploits which Mr. J. Wesley calls, in the place last quoted, **BLESSINGS FROM GOD** : and which therefore We may well call the **GOOD FRUITS** of his Ministry ; those by which James directs us to judge of his *Mission*. For what the Apostle calls *goods fruits*, namely, *doing much good*, Mr. J. Wesley plainly tells us belong not to *true Religion* : What belongs not to true Religion he rightly deems superfluous : And whatever is superfluous he makes solemn resolutions to avoid (7)."

IV. Hitherto the Marks delivered by St. James, to judge of a pretended Missionary from Heaven, consider him as urging his pretensions fairly and with good faith ; tho' possibly in a fanatic or enthusiastic manner : But what follows, — **WITHOUT PARTIALITY AND WITHOUT HYPOCRISY**, — represents the pretender to such a character as capable of acting in a mask, and using the mere worldly arts, of deceit and fraud. And this supposi-

(7) *Journ. from Feb. 1. 1737-8. to his return from Germany*, p. 13.

tion is made with admirable judgment and knowledge of humane nature.

ENTHUSIASM, so indispensable a requisite in the succesful leading of a Sect, must always be accompanied with craft and knavery. There is a necessity for this odd combination; and the thing it self, as strange as it may seem, is very naturally to be accounted for.

A mere cool-headed Projector, without any tincture of innate enthusiasm, can never succeed in his Designs, because such a one can never exhibit those surprising freaks, which a heated imagination, working on a *disordered*, tho', for this purpose, *fitly framed* temper of body, so speciously produces. For the spirits of the People, who are to be taken in, can be captivated only by raising their *admiration*, and keeping up their confidence in an inspired Leader. Besides, new doctrines and new ideas are never so readily received as when the teacher of them is in earnest, and believes *Himself*: For then there is something so natural in his conduct as easily to conciliate belief; there is something so alluring

alluring that it acts even like a Charm.

On the other hand, a *mere Enthusiast*, who by virtue of this faculty hath gone so far in his purpose as to raise the admiration, and to captivate the spirits of the People, must here begin to fail, if he want the other quality, *sectarian craft*; for his *fanaticism* not being under the controll of his *judgment*, he will want the necessary dexterity to apply the different views, tempers, and pursuits of the People, now enflamed and ready to become his Instruments, to the advancement of his Projects.

But when these two talents of *fraud* and *fanaticism* unite to furnish out the Leader of a Sect, great will be the success of his undertakings. And when such a one feels the strength of this union, it is no wonder he should be ready to cry out with Mr. J. Wesley, *give me whereon to stand and I will shake the whole earth* (8). For now the sallies of his Enthusiasm will be so corrected by his cunning, as to strengthen and confirm his supernatural pretences: and the cold and slow advances of a too cautious po-

(8) See p. 130 of this Discourse.

licy will be warmed and pushed forward by the force of his Fanaticism. His *craft* will enable him to elude the enquiries and objections of the more Rational; and his Visions will irrecoverably subdue all the warmer noddles. In a word, they will mutually support and strengthen each other's force, and cover and repair each other's defects. St. Jerom seems to have had some idea of this extraordinary combination, when he said, "Nullus potest Hæresin
"struere, nisi qui ARDENTIS INGENII
"est, et habet DONA NATURAE (9)."

Several things concur to facilitate this happy conjunction. An Enthusiast considers himself as the Instrument employed by Providence to attain some great End, for the sake of which he was sent out. This makes him diligent in his work; impatient under any let or obstruction; and attentive to every method for removing it. Persuaded of the necessity of the End, and of the divine Commission intrusted to the Instrument, he begins to fancy

(9) See Div. L. B. iii. Sect. 6.

that

that such a one, for the obtaining so great a purpose, is dispensed with, in breaking, nay is authorized to break, the common laws of Morality; which, in the cant of those times, when Fanaticism had it's full play, was called the **BEING ABOVE ORDINANCES**. In the first application of these *means*, the People are the Dupes to their Leader: But the success being frequently far beyond even his own conception, he becomes, in his turn, a Dupe to himself, and begins in good earnest to believe that the trick he plaid them was indeed not of his own contrivance, but the inspired instigation of Heaven (10). This will explain an obscure passage of Tacitus, where speaking of this sort of Characters, in his oracular way he says, **FINGUNT SIMUL CREDUNTQUE**. Let me add that this seems to have been much the case of **OLIVER CROMWELL** from his first mounting

(10) That great observer of Nature, **CERVANTES**, having made Sancho (to save himself from the vexation of a sleeveless errand) palm upon his Master a supposititious Dulcinea; When the Squire comes to relate this adventure to the Dutchess, She

into the Saddle and the Pulpit, to his last reveries on his death-bed.

Again, *Enthusiasm* is a kind of ebullition or critical ferment of the mind; which a vigorous nature sometimes works thro', and by slow degrees is able to get the better of. Hence the most successful Impostors who have set out in all the blaze of Fanaticism have ended their Schemes amidst the cool depths and stillness of Politics. Tho' this, in some degree, be common to them all, yet I know of none who exemplifies the case so strongly as the famous IGNATIUS LOIOLA. This wonderful Person began his *extasies* in the mire, and completed his purpose in the direction and execution of Councils, which, even in his own life time, were ready to give the Law to Christendom. Mr. J. Wesley appears to have studied this great Master extolls his ingenuity, so highly, that he begins to suspect himself to be tricked into his own contrivance; and that the Inchanters had presented him with a true Dulcinea in masquerade, when he thought he was imposing a barefaced false one on his Master.

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well:

well: tho' by a common practice of those who set up for themselves, he kicks away the steps by which he mounted. "I rode
 " (says he) to Oxford — in riding I read
 " over that surprising book, the life of
 " IGNATIUS LOIOLA. Surely one of
 " the greatest men that ever was engaged
 " in the support of a *bad cause*. I wonder
 " any man should judge him to be an *Enthusiast*. No: but he knew the people
 " with whom he had to do. And setting
 " out like Count Z, with a full persuasion
 " that he might use *GUILE* to promote
 " the glory of God &c (2)." Now I desire
 to know, how any one but an *ENTHUSIAST* could be persuaded, bona fide, that he
 might use guile to promote the glory of God?
 Or how any one but a *KNAVE* could succeed in this persuasion?—Cicero observes
 that the *Eye*, which sees all other things,
 sees not it self: This instance will shew it
 to be equally true, that the *Mind*, which
 plays such strange tricks, is often very in-

(2) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741. to Oct. 27, 1743, p. 67.

attentive to it's own frame and operations.

Modern Saintship then being so subject to these odd traverses, it is well for BOTH SOCIETIES; That they have an unerring rule whereon to estimate it's Claim. For the Apostle having declared that *the wisdom from above is without PARTIALITY and without HYPOCRISY*, if such qualities be found in those who pretend to derive all, immediately, from the source of Truth, we need no further evidence of the imposture. And now having hitherto employed this famed Head of his Sect for our example, it would be a kind of disrespect to drop him here, and not suffer him to finish, as he began, his apostolical career.

PARTIALITY consists in dispensing an *unequal measure*, in our transactions with Others :

And HYPOCRISY in attempting to cover that *unequal measure* by prevarication and false pretences.

The Reader must have been very inattentive to what hath been produced from Mr. J. Wesley's JOURNALS, not to have observed the many convincing marks of the writer's *partiality* and *hypocrisy*. The passages have indeed been given to convict him of other *fanatic* qualities, equally inconsistent with the *wisdom which is from above*; but many of them will, at the same time, serve to shew, how ably he availed himself of these two political Accomplishments.

We have seen in general, that his Followers are always the *Children of God*; and his Opposers, the *Children of the Devil*. But the first being directed by inward feelings and the impulse of an inflamed fancy, and the other by the outward testimony of Scripture interpreted by human reason, it is no great wonder that Mr. J. Wesley, who saw them so much unlike, should marshal them under these two different Banners. But what shall we say when we find him giving no quarter to Heads as wise, and to Hearts as warm as his own, when they play over his own pranks in any other Name? If they follow not him, they

they are *Fanatics* and *Enthusiasts*, how like soever they be in all other things to his most beloved Disciples. Nay, even *These* likewise are as readily given up when ever they bring danger or discredit to their Master.--“ I was with two persons (says “ Mr. J. Wesley) who, I doubt, are properly *enthusiasts*. For first they think to “ attain the end without the means, which “ is *enthusiasm*, properly so called : again “ they think themselves inspired by God, “ and are not. But false imaginary inspiration is *enthusiasm*. That theirs is “ only imaginary inspiration appears “ hence, it contradicts the Law and the “ Testimony (3).” These are wise words: but what do they amount to? Only to this, That these two persons would not take out their patents of Inspiration from his Office ; and, therefore, he has advertised them, for Counterfeits.

Miss Gr——, one of the inspired, had told another Miss, that Mr. J. Wesley was a *Papist*, perhaps on account of the honour he

(3) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 23.

does to *auricular confession*, in recommending one kind of it to his BANDS. Upon this, Miss Gr—is anathematized. And we are told, that, in consequence, “she had lately been *raving mad*; that, as such, “she was tied down in her bed (4).” Yet all these circumstances of *madness*, have, in the opinion of the ablest Physicians, befallen Mr. J. Wesley’s favourite Saints, whom he has vindicated from that Opprobrium; laughed at the ignorance of the faculty; and declared them to be the constant Symptoms of the NEW BIRTH.

He pronounces Sentence of *Enthusiasm* upon another: And tells us wherefore, without the least disguise.---“Here (says he) I took leave of a poor, mad, original *Enthusiast*, who had been scattering abroad “LIES in every quarter (5).” By which we find, that, even in Mr. J. Wesley’s own opinion, *Fanaticism* and *Knavery* are very near neighbours.

(4) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743, P. 73-4. (5) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746. P. 71.

“I had

" I had much conversation with Mr. Simpson an *original Enthusiast*.---I desired him in the evening to give an exhortation---He did so, and spoke *many good things, in a manner peculiar to himself*. When he had done, I summ'd up what he had said, methodizing and explaining it: O what pity is it that this well meaning man should ever speak without an Interpreter (6)!"

In these two last passages, Mr. J. Wesley presents us with two ORIGINAL ENTHUSIASTS. But how differently do we find them treated! The first is accused of doing the work of the devil, of spreading *lies* of his Master; on which account Mr. J. Wesley took his leave of him: a gentle expression, to signify, the thrusting him out, head and shoulders, from the Society of Saints; The other likewise, whose *original enthusiasm* is made to consist only in want of *Method*, or, to speak more properly, want of *Methodism*, is only lamented, as having the ill luck

(6) Journ. *ibid.* p. 91.

to

to speak without an Interpreter. That is, without having his doctrine regulated on the dictates of his Master. But the First set his Master at defiance: the Second *spoke many good things*, that is, he professed a doctrine agreeable to Mr. Wesley; indeed, *in a manner peculiar to himself*, that is, not on Mr. Wesley's Authority, but his own. Now, there were some hopes of Him; but none at all of the other. Therefore tho' they are pronounced ORIGINAL ENTHUSIASTS alike, yet we must understand their Titles very differently. The first *Original* was of his original the Devil, *a scatterer abroad of lies in every quarter.* The second was worth recovering. His *Original enthusiasm* was a foundation, like *Original Sin*, to erect upon it a monument of Grace.

But the most *genuine instance of enthusiasm*, which, he tells us, he will give, and which without doubt he does give, with the utmost reluctance, is the following. He preached at *Tanfield-Leigh*.---“ But so
“ dead, *senseless*, unaffected a congrega-
“ tion (says he) have I scarce seen, except
“ at

“ at *Wickham*. Whether Gospel or Law,
 “ or English or Greek, seemed all one to
 “ them.” Yet he *spoke*, he tells us, *strong*
rough words. But why is *want of sense* put
 into this *rough* description of their un-
 regenerate state? He owns, that num-
 bers of the Godly were without any.
 And why would he elicit *sense* from these
 Gentiles, when, on their conversion, they
 were finally to be deprived of it, in *extacies*
 and *new births*. However, as ungrateful
 as the soil appeared,---“ Yet the seed sown
 “ even there was not quite lost. For on
 “ Thursday morning, between four and
 “ five, *John Brown*, then of *Tan-field-*
 “ *Leigh*, was *waked out of sleep* by the
 “ voice that raiseth the dead; and ever
 “ since he has been full of love and peace
 “ and joy in the Holy Ghost.” But now
 see what comes of *waking these sleepers*.
 This same J---B--- who had received the
 holy Ghost but at the latter end of No-
 vember, became so *freakish* by the be-
 ginning of December, that he even forc-
 ed Mr. J. Wesley (for the honour of Me-
 thodism it selfe) to pronounce *him like-*
 wise

wife a *genuine Enthusiast*, and to throw aside this precious Saint, as flawed by over-bakeing, amongst the useles rubbish of his Shop.

"I was both surpris'd and griev'd."
—Here, Reader, thou mayest safely believe him--- "At a *genuine instance of Enthusiasm*,
" J---B--- of Tanfield Leigh, who had
" received a SENSE of the love of God a
" few days before, came riding thro' the
" town, *hollowing and shouting*" [the inseparable symptoms of the *new birth*]
" And driving all the People before him,
" telling them, *God had told him he should*
" *be a KING, and should tread all his enemies*
" *under his feet (7).*"

Now this being the only fruit of the seed sown in this place, had it not been better to have let these honest people alone? who appear amiable, even thro' the sarcastic abuse he so liberally pours over them.---- "At Wickham, I spoke strong rough words: but I did not perceive that any regarded what was spok-

(7) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741. to Oct. 27,

1743. P. 79.

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“ en. The People indeed were exceed-
 “ ing quiet, and the cold kept them from
 “ falling asleep ; till, before two, I left
 “ them very well satisfied with the Preacher
 “ and with themselves (8).” And why
 should they not ! Why is this satisfaction
 in themselves, which they had so libe-
 rally expressed towards him, begrudged
 them. An ordinary Man desires no more,
 than that his friends be satisfied with him ;
 he does not expect, nay he would be sorry,
 to find them dissatisfied with themselves.
 But such an equality of mind and mea-
 sure, as in the good people of Wickham,
 is destructive of all the schemes of a Fana-
 tic Leader : Who must find, or make, a
 People desperate, and ready to hang them-
 selves, before they can be prepared and
 rightly tempered for the Mould of Me-
 thodism.

We shall end, where every Fanatic Lea-
 der ends,---with his HYPOCRISY. And if
evasion and *prevarication*, in the most es-
 sential points of his Ministry, may be
 called by that name, I cannot see how

(8) Ibid. p. 78.

Mr.

Mr. J. Wesley will escape from having this concluding mark of imposture fixed upon him.

I. We have wearied our selves and Readers, in recounting the numberless MIRACLES by which He, and his affairs have been supported, in a *cloud of Witnesses* well disposed to magnify them. Yet, after all this, with a *worldly prudence* which one would not expect in a man who calls this quality *the mystery of Iniquity*, he thinks fit to secure himself a retreat, in case all these strange things should become problematical. For after having heaped them one upon another Olympus-high, throughout nine copious Journals, he sneaks away under the protection of a puny-Wonder, and leaves the defence of all his Giant-miracles in the lurch! "About five (says he) " I began near the Keel-man's Hospital, " many thousands standing round or sitting on the Grass. The wind was high " just before; but scarce a breath was " felt, all the time we assembled before " God. I praise God for this also. Is it " ENTHUSIASM TO SEE GOD IN EVERY

BENEFIT

BENEFIT *which we receive* (9) ? Certainly it is not. The *Enthusiasm* consists in believing those *benefits* to be *miraculously* conferred, thro' a change in the established course of Nature. This is the *Enthusiasm* with which he is charged; and this Charge, almost every page of his journals, will support. But here, by the neatest address, he covertly insinuates, (as a Word to the Wise) that he meant no more by his *Miracles*, than the *seeing of God in every benefit we receive*. This goes a great way towards ridding his hands of them when the Inquisitive become too troublesome. But as he well knew it might be said to him, If you part with your *Miracles*, you strip yourself of the credentials of your Mission; he has a Friend at hand to help him out at a dead lift; whose opinion, "he wishes all calm, " and impartial men would consider——
 " Not to establish the power of *working*
 " *Miracles* as the great Criterion of a
 " divine Mission; when Scripture teaches

(8) Journ. from July, 20, 1750. to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 18.

“us that the agreement of doctrines with
 “truth as taught in those Scriptures is the
 “only infallible Rule (3).” Suppose now
 any sense could be drawn out of this
 gallimatias of Scripture’s teaching that the
 agreement of doctrines with truth as taught
 in those Scriptures, is the only infallible
 rule: And that it may mean, “that
 Scripture teaches us, that the confor-
 mity of it’s doctrines with truth, is the
 only Criterion,” I then ask, Where
 SCRIPTURE teacheth this? I ask it, I say,
 Because REASON teacheth another thing:
 for from the Premisses, of the conformity of
 Scripture doctrines with truth, her Conclu-
 sion is only this, That Scripture doctrines
 are true; not that they were immediately
 derived from Heaven. I am afraid there-
 fore, that Scripture is here much scan-
 dalized, in making it talk a language so
 dissonant to Reason. And I am the more
 confirmed in this opinion, since Scripture
 from the mouth of Jesus himself, expressly
 says, that the power of working miracles,

(3) Journ. from August 12, 1738. to November
 1, 1739. P. 72.

and not *the conformity of Scripture doctrines to truth*, is the great *criterion of a divine Mission*. The words of Jesus are these :
 “ If I had not done amongst them the
 “ works which none other man did, they
 “ had not had Sin : But now have they
 “ both seen and hated me and my Fa-
 “ ther (4).” But why, in case *no mira-
 cles had been worked* amongst them, *had
 they not had Sin ?* For this reason, and
 only for this, that, without *miracles*,
 there was *no criterion* of a divine Mis-
 sion. And Sin could not be imputed
 to them for rejecting a Character which
 did not bring it's credentials with it.
 From what I can see then, Mr. J. Wesley
 must either stick to his *Miracle*, or give
 up his *Mission*.

II. But he shifts and doubles no less
 with regard to the *Extacies*, and the *New-
 birth* of his Saints. Sometimes they
 are undoubtedly of *God*; sometimes
 again as certainly of the *Devil*: but he is
 constant in this, that *Natural causes* have

(4) John c. xv. v. 24

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no hand in them. The reason is plain: He could make both GOD and the DEVIL conducive to his purposes; but NATURE is the sure destruction of every enthusiastic frolic.—The Saints met in Fetter lane to humble themselves before God for *grieving the holy Spirit*.—To the several offences assigned, Mr. J. Wesley adds —“But above all by BLASPHEMING HIS WORKS amongst us, imputing it either to NATURE, to the force of imagination and animal Spirits, or even the *delusion of the DEVIL*. At that hour we found GOD with us as at the first. *Some fell prostrate upon the ground. Others burst out, as with one consent into a loud praise and thanksgiving.* And many openly testified, There had been no such day as this, since January the first, preceding (5).”—“On Friday many were deeply convinced; but none were delivered from that painful conviction. The Children came to the birth; but there was not strength to

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738. to Nov. 1. 1739. P. 58.

“bring

"bring forth, *I fear we have grieved the Spirit of the jealous God by questioning his work (6).*"

—"Innumerable cautions were given me not to regard *Visions* or *Dreams*, or to fancy people had remission of Sins, because of their *Cries*, or tears, or outward professions.---The Sum of my answer was as follows: You deny that God does now work these effects: at least that he works them in this manner. *I affirm both.* Because I have heard these things with my own ears, and seen them with my own eyes. I have seen very many persons changed in a moment from the Spirit of fear, horror, despair, to the Spirit of love, joy, and peace — What I have to say touching *Visions* or *Dreams* is this: I know several persons in whom this great change was wrought in a *dream*, or during a *strong representation to the eye of the mind* of Christ, either on the Cross or in Glory. This is the fact (7).——Nay, he is so con-

(6) Journ. Ibid. p. 16. (7) Journ. Ibid. p. 49.

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vinced of it's being the *work* of God that the horrid *blasphemies* which ensued, he ascribes to the abundance of joy, which God had given to a poor mad woman of his flock. "I met with one, who having
 " been lifted up with the abundance of joy
 " which God had given her, had fallen in-
 " to blasphemies and vain imaginations
 " as are not common to men. In the after-
 " noon I found another instance, nearly, I
 " fear of the same kind----She had her
 " *private revelations* so called, &c (8)." But now, on a sudden, he gives us the reverse of the Medal, and directly revokes all he had advanced.—" I told them they
 " were not to judge of the Spirit, where-
 " by any one spoke, either by *appearances*
 " or by *common report*, or by their own
 " *inward feelings*. No, nor by any *Dreams*,
 " *Visions*, or Revelations supposed to be
 " made to their soul, any more than by
 " their tears, or any *involuntary effects*
 " wrought upon their bodies. I warned
 " them, all these were in themselves of a

(8) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739. to Sept. 3.
 1741. P. 54.

" DOUBLE

"DOUBLE DISPUTABLE NATURE. They
 "might be from God, or they might
 not (9)." The Reader cannot but be much
 surpris'd to find so formal a recantation of
 what he had said (10) just above, concern-
 ing *inward feelings, dreams, visions and ex-*
tacies; and of his own *confidence* in affirm-
 ing these to be the work of God, from his
having both heard these things with his own
ears, and from his having seen them with his
own eyes; for here he denies *common report*,
 (and are not other people's ears and eyes
 as good as his?) or *appearances* or even *seal-*
ings, to be a sufficient ground of assurance.
 Of this, I can give no better account, and
 perhaps the Reader will desire no better,
 than this, that when our Apostle thought
 fit thus to unsay, what he had so con-
 fidently affirmed before, it was in a des-
 ponding hour, when he *was in much doubt*
whether God would not lay him aside and
send other Labourers into his harvest (1).
 Under these fears he seem'd resolv'd, at

(9) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738. to Nov. 1.
 1739. p. 60, 61. (10) See p. (11) Journ,
 Ibid. p. 60.

“ others, that they thought, a great
 “ weight lay upon them, as if it would
 “ squeeze them into the Earth. Some
 “ said they were quite choak’d so that
 “ they could not breathe; others, that
 “ their hearts swelled ready to burst: and
 “ others, that it was as if their Heart, as
 “ if all their Inside, as if their whole Bo-
 “ dy was tearing all to pieces. These
 “ *Symptoms* I can no more impute to any
 “ NATURAL CAUSE than to the SPIRIT
 “ OF GOD. I can make no doubt but it
 “ was SATAN tearing them as they were
 “ coming to Christ. And hence proceed-
 “ ed those grievous *cries* whereby he
 “ might design both to *discredit* the Work
 “ of God, and to affright fearful People
 “ from hearing that Word, whereby their
 “ souls might be saved (2).”

Now, the Reader must take notice, that
 these were the very *Symptoms* which Mr. J.
 Wesley had before ascribed to the *spirit of*
God. But, by this time he was sensible, and
 so he confesses, in this very place, that they

(2) Journ. from Sep. 3, 1741. to Oct. 27,
 1743. p. 91.

had DISCREDITED the *Work*. They were therefore, to be sent to the DEVIL; yet still upon Mr. J. Wesley's Errand. For there is nothing, except NATURE, as we observed, which he can not put to some use or other. But this new Donation of the *extacies of the Saints* was, besides, a noble foundation for what he was now projecting, the Farce of DIABOLISMS and EXORCISMS. Well, therefore, might he exult over this Old Mischief-maker, *as not having wit enough to discern* that he was over-matched, and that Mr. John Wesley was too hard for him. *I wonder* (says he) *the Devil has not wisdom enough to discern that he is destroying his own Kingdom* (3). Indeed, he has fairly turned the tables upon SATAN; and shewn us, that he can make full as good an use of a POSSESSION from below, as of an INSPIRATION from above.

III. The Reader remembers how contemptuously Mr. Wesley has spoken of *Orthodoxy*, or *true belief*; even to the questioning whether it makes *any part of Religion* at

(3) Jour. from Nov. 1, 1749. to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 56.

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all; certain is he, that, at best, it makes but a very slender part. "It is a point," says he, we chiefly insist upon, that "Orthodoxy, or right Opinion is at best but a very slender part of Religion, if any part of it at all (4)." This was done to take in as many as he could, from amongst the *Seſtaries*: But when he wants to take off as many as he can, from amongst the *Churchmen*, then *Orthodoxy*, or true belief, is like *Methodism*, the *Unum Neceſſarium*: or, to ſpeak more properly, *Orthodoxy* and *Methodism* are but two words for the ſame thing. "About a thouſand people ſtood patiently while I ſimply deſcribed the plain old Religion of the Church of England, which is now almoſt every where ſpoken againſt, under the new name of *Methodism* (5)."

IV. We have ſeen him (in the true Spirit of a *Seſtary*) both inviteing and provoking *Perſecution*, as the only means of

(4) Mr. Weſley's plain account, &c. p. 4.

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738. to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 90.

making

making the good seed take root ; For, after having sown it in the mud and slime, his *field-preaching*, by a kind of Ægyptian Husbandry (6), draws together whole droves of obscene Animals, who rush furiously in, and trample it about; but this, as that mother-seat of ARTS may have informed him, only made it spring up the better — “ The Mob, says he, gathered in great numbers about my door, and quite closed me in. *I rejoiced and blessed God, knowing this was the time I had long been looking for* (7)”. But, mistake him not. A *Persecution* he certainly wished, and as diligently sought. But it was for his beloved Saints, who wanted it; not for himself, who wanted it not; especially when it began to grow serious, as we shall now see it once did. In his ramble to *Georgia*, he got acquainted with one Mrs. Williamson, (so, he himself tells the story)

(6) — in suum quisque rus jacto femine, Sues immittit, et satis conculcato a Suibus femine, messem deinde expectat. *Herod.* l. ii. c. 14.

(7) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 56.

to whom he refused the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. She had done some *wrong*, it seems, *to her neighbour*. What it was, he does not tell us. The Uncle (he says) desired he would declare in the Court-house, why he expelled Mrs. Williamson from the holy Communion. But he declined it, as apprehending *many ill consequences* might arise from so doing. What he would not declare, the Uncle did; and said, that it was *in revenge for rejecting his Mr. Wesley's proposals of marriage, and marrying Mr. Williamson*. The Husband prosecuted him for *defamation*: And the Wife "swore and signed an affidavit, *insinuating much more than asserted*, but asserting, that Mr. Wesley "had many times proposed marriage to "her, all which proposals she had re-
"jected."

In consequence of this, "He is pre-
"sented by the *Grand Jury*, upon oath,
"as having broken the Laws of the Realm
"by speaking and writing to Mrs. Wil-
"liamson against her husband's consent;
"by repelling her from the holy Com-
"munion,

"munion, &c." The matter was now
 growing serious ; the Georgians, he found,
 did not understand raillery, in the affair
 of spiritual Gallantry. It was time for him
 to look about him. In this distress, he
 began to have recourse, as usual, to his
revelations—"I consulted my friends, *when*
the God did not call me to return to
 "England. The reason for which I left
 "it had now no force, there being no
 "possibility, as yet, of instructing the In-
 "dians : Neither had I, as yet, found or
 "heard of any Indians on the continent
 "of America, who had the least desire of
 "being instructed.—After deeply confi-
 "dering these things ; *they were unani-*
 "*mous that I ought to go ; but not yet.*"
 However, the Magistrate soon quickened
 his pace. He was declared an *Enemy to,*
and Hinderer of, the public peace. — "I
 "again (says he) consulted my friends,
 "who agreed with me, *that the time we*
 "*looked for was now come.*" The Rea-
 der, who has seen him so long languish
 for persecution, will conclude, he was now
 preparing to meet it with the constancy of
 a Martyr.

a Martyr. No such matter. He was preparing for his flight. But to hide his poltrony in a bravado, he gave public notice of his Apostolical intention. On which the Magistrates ordered that he should first find security to appear, when summoned, to answer the Charge brought against him. But he refusing, they published a Placart, "requiring all the Officers and Centinels "to prevent his going out of the Province; and forbidding any persons to "assist him in so doing." Things were now come to a Crisis: and Mr. J. Wesley, on the whole, thought it best to retreat without beat of drum; and to steal a march upon the Enemy.—"I saw clearly, " (says he) the hour was come for leaving "this place. And as soon as *Evening* "prayer was over [for Prayer must always "make a part in his Stratagems] about "eight o'clock, the tide then serving, I "shook off the dust of my feet (8)." A very pleasant way, truly, of acting the *Apostle*.

(8) Journ. from his embarking to Georgia, for his return to London, p. 46 to 56.

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But if he made the path easy for himself, he took care to render it doubly perplexed for his followers. He left, we see, his *little Flock* in the lurch, to answer, as they could, for the crimes of their runaway Pastor.

But had his *longings* for *persecution* been *without Hypocrisy*, he had here the fairest occasion of honestly indulging himself to the full. He had gone as far as *Georgia* for it. The truth of his Mission was brought in question by the Magistrate, and decried by the People; not so much for his false doctrines, as his *false morals*. The honour of the Gospel was wounded through the Sides of it's pretended Missionary. There was but one way to support its credit, the way the first Christian Preachers always took, the offering up themselves for the Truth they preached, and for the Integrity they professed. Instead of this, our paltry Mimic thinks he had discharged an Apostolic office, when he applied to himself an Apostolic phrase,—*I shook off*
the

the dust of my feet, says he; much easier done than shaking off his infamy. Jesus, indeed, orders his Followers to *shake off the dust of their feet*, where the inhabitants would not receive their Doctrine, that they might not throw away their time in vain: But he never directed it as a Trial ordeal of innocence, when they were accused of immoralities, and the honour of the Mission concerned. When Paul and Silas had been imprisoned, and otherwise evil treated at Philippi, neither the *Miracle* nor the *Magistrate*, (when each, in their turn, had set open the Prison doors) could persuade them to stir a step till they had procured all honourable satisfaction for much injurious treatment (9). But what do I speak of the cases, in which the *prudence*, recommended by our great Master, directs his Disciples to *avoid*, or the *courage*, with which he inspires them, enables them to *dare*, the rage of PERSECUTION: We are now on the detection of a HYPO-

(9) Acts xvi.

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CRITE, who expressed his longings for persecution; who invited it, who provoked it, in a Country where the Magistrate restrained and forbad it; and yet ran away from it when his own honour, as well as that of his *little flock*, should have induced him to oppose himself to it; and where the Magistrate, by his own account, was forward enough and ready to oblige him. But he ran away, like a Coward, on the wings of *Prayer* and the *Tide*: Henceforth, the dread of this entertainment prepared for him, and the horror of the unhospitable shore, made such an impression on his temper, that he lets slip no occasion of revenge. For when the good man was got back to Europe, and even forced to beat it on the hoof as far as Hernhuth, in Germany, before he could get into a *Land of Christians* (10).

(10) "At Weymar, we came before, I know not what great man (I believe the Duke) who, after many questions, asked, what we were going so far as *Hernhuth*, for? I answered, TO SEE THE PLACE WHERE THE CHRISTIANS LIVE. He looked hard, and let us go." *Journ. from Feb. 1, 1737-8, to his return from Germany*, p. 45.

He

He overtook, as he tells us, 'in a little village on the road, " A large number " of *Switzers*, Men, women, and Children, singing, dancing, and making merry, being all going to make their fortunes in GEORGIA. *Looking upon them* (says he) AS BEING DELIVERED INTO MY HANDS BY GOD, I plainly told them, what manner of place it was. " If they now leap into the Fire with open eyes, *their blood is on their own head* (1). " It would be hard to guess how he came to look upon *these Switzers as delivered into his hands by God*, unless he believed God was bound to revenge all his squabbles with the young Wenches of his *Bands*, (which, by his Journals, we find were not a few) and that therefore *God prepared these Switzers for the Instruments of his Vengeance*. He made a proper use of them; he *opened their eyes*; and so, in all likelihood, deprived a British Colony of many useful hands.

(1) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 2, 1739, p. 6.

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V. We have seen above, how he set *wordly prudence, Christian prudence*, and, in a word, every thing which bears the name of PRUDENCE, at full defiance; denouncing it to be the *bane of Religion*, and the *Instrument of the Devil*. This was but necessary, to inflame the madness of his Followers. But a very different language is required, when the ambition of his RIVALS is to be restrained. Then PRUDENCE is the very balm of Gilead, the assuager of hurt Minds, and great restorative of sickening Peace.

But we should take the affair from it's beginning. So early as in the year thirty nine, he began to suspect, that he should have *Rivals* in his Apostolic office.—

“ I came into my old Room at Oxford,
 “ from which I went to Georgia. Here,
 “ musing on the things that were past,
 “ and remembering how many that came
 “ after me were preferred before me, I opened my Testament, &c. (2). For you

(2) Journ. from Nov. 1. 1739. to Sept. 3, 1741. P. 14-15.

must

must know, Reader, that, of all the *Superstitions* (and they were not a few) which struggled for Dominion with *fanaticism* in the holy Microcosm of this wondrous Man, the SORTES SANCTORUM were the Chief. A species of Divination to which, St. Austin tells us, the good Christians of his time had recourse rather than to consult the Devil, like their pagan Neighbours. To this favorite folly, our Missionary refers all his doubts. It is his Urim and Thummim, and he applies it as freely and irreverently to his occasions, as a Village Conjuror does his *Sive and Sheers*. At this time, indeed, it afforded him but small relief. He sunk so far in his despondency as to doubt whether God would not lay him aside, and send *other labourers into his harvest* (3). We soon see what it was that gave him these dreadful twitches. A Rival no less formidable than the famed Mr. WHITEFIELD who now began to set up for himself; and,

(3) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1. 1739. p. 60.

indeed,

indeed, as much the madder of the two, to ingross the favour of the Mob. While the Rivalship continued on a tolerable footing, Mr. J. Wesley contented himself with now and then giving his *beloved Brother in Christ* a sly wipe of contempt, as occasion presented, under the Saintly cover of *praising God for him*.—"I read prayers and Mr. *Whitefield* preached. How wise is God in giving *different talents* to different Preachers! even *the little improprieties both of his language and manner* were a means of profiting many who would not have been touched by a *more correct discourse*, or a *more calm and regular manner of speaking* (4)." This, we see, was full in his teeth, but by a side wind comes up to that *Master-Preacher*, who is insinuated to be more correct, and calm, and graceful in his Pulpit-Manners. Notwithstanding this, Mr. *Whitefield* went on triumphantly; and, being willing to advance himself on the necks of his Fellows,

(4) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 24.

taught

taught FAITH ALONE; and offered FREE GRACE to a People little disposed to purchase it. Mr. J. Wesley was an Advocate for WORKS: But he must do them himself, if he expected any good from them, in this Contention. For an equivalent, therefore, to Mr. Whitefield's *spiritual graces*, He, like another Moses, dispensed his *temporal Blessings*. Particularly, in the ART of Healing; for he would trust no longer to the GIFT, full as his Journals are of his *miraculous Cures*. It was now, he found, high time to set up a regular practice. Accordingly, he told his People how deeply read he was in Medicine, which he had studied at Oxford. And to prove himself no Quack, he published a whole book of Receipts or Remedies for all the common Distempers of life. At the same time, he let the better Sort understand, he was as well skilled in the *medicina Mentis*. He had given innumerable flights of contempt, in his Journals, against HUMAN *learning*: and, indeed, of what use could Learning be in a Religion like that which he propagated? Where, as he

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he assures us, *Orthodoxy or right belief made a very slender part, if any part at all.* Yet when now he was to struggle with a Rival *pro aris & focis*, no means were to be left untried to secure his Dominion of the People: He therefore plainly enough informs them, that he was ready to teach, in a better and more expeditious way than was hitherto known, even to the *UNIVERSITIES*, two eminent parts of this decried *Learning*, namely, *Rhetoric* and *Ethics*.

" This week (says he) I read over with
" some young men a Compendium of *Rhe-*
" *toric*, and a System of *Ethics*. I see not
" why a man of tolerable understanding
" may not learn, in six months time, more
" of *solid Philosophy* than is learned at Ox-
" ford in four (perhaps seven) years (5)".

Did ever *Jesuit* play his part better. Yet this would not do. *Free Grace* bore down all before it; and Mr. Wesley was at last forced, as in a desperate case, to have recourse to that paltry quack remedy, which he had so much scorned and

(5) Journ. from Nov. 25. 1746, to July 20, 1750, p. 14.

execrated,

execrated, I mean, PRUDENCE.—“ I
 “ believed (says he) both love and justice
 “ required that I should speak my senti-
 “ ments freely to Mr. Wh—— concern-
 “ ing the Letter he had published, said
 “ to be *in answer to my sermon on FREE*
 “ *GRACE.* The sum of what I observed
 “ to him was this: 1. that it was quite
 “ IMPRUDENT to publish it at all, as
 “ being only *the putting of weapons into*
 “ *their hands, who loved neither the one*
 “ *nor the other.* 2. that if he was con-
 “ strained to bear his testimony, as he term-
 “ ed it (6), against the error I was in, he
 “ might have done it by publishing a
 “ treatise on this head *without ever calling*
 “ *my name in question.*—However, he had
 “ said enough—to make an open (and
 “ probably irreparable) breach between
 “ him and me: seeing, *for a treacherous*
 “ (6) Here Mr. J. Wesley can treat with scorn
 that very *can* in which himself so much abounds,
 the applying Scripture phrases to the impertinence
 of modern occurrences.

Z

.87
 at Wound,

*“Wound, and for the BEWRAYING OF
“SECRETS every friend will depart (7)”*

Without doubt, the Reader will be curious to know what these *Secrets* were, which had been so ill kept between these two *Free Masons*. But the purpose of this Discourse is not to prejudice the Readers against this extraordinary Man, from anecdotes on tradition; or from *secrets bewrayed*; but to enable them to form a judgment of his pretences, from what he himself has openly recorded of himself; and frequently repeated to the World. What I would have them observe, on the last quoted passage, is only this, That Mr. J. Wesley, after so long estrangement from *WORLDLY PRUDENCE* has, at length, in his distresses, been forced to have recourse to it: And, for his first essay, it must be owned, he acquits himself very well in the exercise of this neglected Virtue. *“The Letter Mr. Whitefield had written should not have been pub-*

(7) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739. to Sept. 3, 1741. P. 78.

“ lished

“lished, as it was putting *Weapons* into
 “the hands of the common Enemy” —
 It should not have been published, as it
 tended to a *Schism* in the Society — “If
 “he must needs publish it, he should not
 “have called Mr. Wesley’s name in ques-
 “tion”, as this tended to a breach be-
 tween these two fast friends — And if
 he (Mr. Wesley) should never consent to
 have this breach closed, he was justified in
 PRUDENCE, since the *Wise man* says, *from*
a treacherous wound and bewraying secrets
every friend will depart; which he un-
 derstands to signify, *every friend ought to*
depart. Indeed, the Reader will ob-
 serve, that there was one expedient of
 PRUDENCE left untryed, which was,
 the *meeting his quondam friend half way*.
 Mr. Wesley was no stranger, nor was he an
 enemy, to this pacific measure, as we shall
 see presently. But Mr. Whitfield was too
 formidable a Rival with whom to compro-
 mise matters, or even to yield an inch. A
 less considerable Opposer might be ma-
 naged this way, without danger; and then

his *prudence* directs him to pursue it. —
 “ I laboured (says he) to convince Mr.
 “ G—— that he had *not done well in*
 “ *confuting* (as he termed it) the Ser-
 “ mon I had preached the Sunday before.
 “ But he was absolutely above convic-
 “ tion (1)”. — Would not *prudence* now
 have justified him in leaving a man *above*
conviction, to the error of his own ways ?
 Surely a less consummate *prudence* than
 Mr. J. Wesley’s would have done so.
 But he will not leave Mr. G——
 so unkindly. “ I then asked (says he)
 “ *Will you meet me half-way ?* I will never
 “ preach publicly against you. Will
 “ not you against me ? But he disclaim-
 “ ed any such agreement.” Here we see
 a very fair invitation to Mr. G—— to play
 the *Hypocrite* with him. He declares
 Mr. G—— to be *absolutely above con-*
viction; that is, that he could not in con-
 science stir a step; which, too, was his

(1) Journ. from July 20, 1750. to Oct. 28,
 1754. p. 81.

own case: Yet, in the same breath, he invites him *to meet him half way*. But Mr. G ——— approved himself the honestest man. From all this we have reason to conclude, that Mr. J. Wesley, amidst his warmest exclamations against *Worldly PRUDENCE* against *Christian PRUDENCE*, and against *PRUDENCE* of every denomination, had it still in petto to employ a succedaneum, on every pressing occasion; which he, indeed, calls *PRUDENCE*; but which, to save the credit of his consistency, he had better have let go under its true name of *CRAFT*.

Thus have I endeavoured to tear off the Mask from the furious and deformed visage of Fanaticism and Seduction. The power of Religion hath enabled me: and the interests of Religion have excited me to this attempt; nothing so much discrediting the *Doctrine of GRACE* as these counterfeit impressions of the Spirit of God. For, since the descent of the Holy Ghost was no longer in *the rushing mighty wind*, but in *the still small voice*, licentious men have

been but too apt to conclude, either that GRACE was an imaginary Power; or, at most, that it was no other than that assistance which the divine Attribute of *Goodness*, as discoverable by Natural light, was always ready to impart to distressed and helpless man; just as they would persuade themselves that REDEMPTION is nothing else than that restoration to God's favour, which his mercy, discoverable too by the same light, prepares and lays open to repentant Sinners. But I shall chuse a proper place to shew, that Gospel-GRACE and REDEMPTION, arising out of a *lively faith* and a *real Sacrifice*, are specifically different from any thing that *Natural Religion* teacheth.

III.

I NOW turn, for what remains of this Discourse, to those sober Ministers of the Established Church, who hold themselves bound to obey its DISCIPLINE as well as to profess its DOCTRINES.

If any good use may be made of what has been already said, it will be chiefly promoted by these Reverend Men, who
in

in honour of the Church which they serve, and in gratitude to the State by which they are protected, will make it their first care to support that most just of all Public Laws, the LAW OF TOLERATION: Which, how long soever obstructed in its passage to us, and how late soever arrived amongst us, is certainly of *divine Original*. Nor will such Men ever venture to *refine* upon it (which will always be to *weaken* it) by idle distinctions between the *letter* and the *spirit* of the Law. For between these, in well composed Laws, there is no difference; the *letter* being no other than the language and expression of the *spirit*. Indeed, one would wonder, they should ever have been opposed, did we not know how ready *Superstition* has always been to support the interests of bad Policy; though by vitiating both the intellects and the morals of Mankind. God once gave a *preparatory Religion* to a select People; under the name of LAW, by which the future dispensation was half-revealed and half-hidden. In such a

Law

Law the *letter* and the *spirit* were necessarily different. A difference, which the Ministers to whom the propagation of this future Religion has been intrusted have been much accustomed to inculcate. Hence Superstition, very absurdly applied, as it did in many other particulars of the Jewish Law, ill understood that distinction, to Civil Laws, where the full meaning was instant, and should be obvious; and where, as far as there was any real difference, so far were these Laws defective in their Composition.

The Friend of *Toleration* therefore will not, I say, make any distinction, or contend for any difference, between the *letter* and the *spirit* of this Sovereign Law, which does so much honour to human Nature. This will be the task of him who regards it as only a temporary expedient, forced upon us, to prevent greater evils. And as, amongst the friends of *Toleration*, the English Clergy, seduced by a common error, were not the first, to give it a cordial reception, it seems incumbent

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on their Successors, who were however amongst the first to detect that *common error*, to obliterate the memory of the old prejudices of their Order, by the warmest patronage and support, of what their reason now so much approves.

Their friendly attachment to this Law will be best approved, by their considering it first in a *spiritual view* as doing honour to a *Christian Church*; implying confidence in the truth of its constitution, and that it will receive no detriment by a comparison with any other, how near or close soever they may be set by it.

And secondly, in an *ecclesiastical view* as bestowing benefit on the *national Church*; it being a certain Maxim in politics that an *established Religion* under a *Toleration* and a *Test* must always go on enlarging its bounds; since the restraint which this latter Law imposes, is so little, that it is considered rather as a small inconvenience than an injury; a burthen so light as not to exasperate, but barely to excite a disposition to its removal.

In a word, that CHURCH where Toleration is cordially received and zealously supported, may be truly called EVANGELICAL: for if the *Mark of Antichrist* be PERSECUTION, the *Seal of the living God and his Christ* must needs be TOLERATION.

This, it may be observed, for the honour of the established Clergy, is the present condition of things. If any stale particles of the *old heaven* still remain, they lie perfectly inactive. A new Start-up Sect, indeed, will be apt to put them into a temporary ferment: and, on such an occasion, they will be eager to expose their evil nature.

Thus, the first appearance of METHODISM began to heat and irritate the mistaken Zeal of some ill instructed men, against a new species of Fanaticism, which, pretended to be of the Church, and yet insolently violated its *Discipline*; disdaining to shelter itself under the peaceable cover of a legal Toleration; for these men, in their hearts, were enemies to this Law, as fanatic Sects generally are;

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who contend for religious Liberty, not because they would obey conscience, but because they, an' please you, are the Advocates of Truth; *Liberty*, as well as *Dominion* being, in their opinion, founded in GRACE. This, indeed, was a trying occasion; but had those over heated men considered that the *Methodists* provoked the Public patience merely to procure to themselves a *mock persecution*; for to more, (as they very well knew) it could never amount, in a State where the *honour* of the national Religion was secured by a *Toleration*, and the *safety* of it, by a *Test*; had they considered this, I say, they would have left these factious men to themselves.

Besides, a fairer opportunity never presented itself, to do us credit. Had the Clergy only appeared easy with those who had qualified themselves to claim a legal Toleration, their acquiescence might have been imputed to their impotency in contending with it. But by bearing patiently with *Methodism*, they might have shewn the World, that the *Toleration-Act* had

had their hearts, as well as their obedience, for this Sect professed to be of the Church, and yet, at the same time, dared to insult its Discipline, and set its Governors at defiance; practices which no equitable indulgence would screen from punishment. This was the time for the Clergy to vindicate their character from the calumnies of their enemies; and they wisely laid hold on it: So that now they could be no longer suspected of malevolence to the *Law of toleration*, when in an instance, where they were free from its power, they yet bore with temper, and, though provoked by insolent defiance, overlooked the behaviour of a Sect of Fanatics, over whom all Laws, divine and human, had given them jurisdiction.

But now, if we shew ourselves thus rightly disposed in favour of the divine principle of Toleration, where the Law hath left offenders against Church Government to the justice of its Rulers, much readier shall we be to suffer the honest Sectary, who hath legally qualified himself for the enjoyment

enjoyment of his religious liberty to possess it without trouble or controll.

When the Law of *Toleration* had once established this universal Right, it soon appeared, that that other Law of prior date, the *Test* (for the formation of *civil* Systems do not always, like the *natural*, begin at the right end) was now become more necessary, than ever, for the peace of the State, by securing the Rights of the national Church. For, by this Law, Sectaries were restrained from the exercise of certain *civil offices*, which some men have been pleased to call *natural Rights*.

But it may so happen, by the Custom or Constitution of *Corporate Bodies*, that the conditional restraint which the *Test* imposes, shall, by accident, become a benefit or advantage; as when a Sectarian member of a Corporation is appointed by his Body, to discharge a very important, though very onerous Office; and yet not permitted by the State to enter on it, but on conditions which his religious principles will not suffer him to comply with.

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For it having been, a long time, the custom for the Member, when nominated to this Office, to purchase, of the Body, an exemption, at a large price, by way of fine; when this came to be demanded of a dissenting Member, he naturally replied, that it could not equitably regard any but such who willingly declined a permitted office; certainly, not Those whom the Law had forbidden, by severe penalties, to enter upon it. But to this so plausible a plea, it was thought a sufficient answer, "That the Law, of whose restraint the dissenting Member would thus avail himself, was never intended for his benefit or emolument."

The question therefore to be decided was this, "Whether he who cannot serve is equally obnoxious to the fine, with him who will not:" and, to this day, it remains undetermined.

Now I humbly conceive, it can never be rightly resolved, till the true nature of the TEST LAW be previously settled: and

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when that is done, it will, I suppose, no longer continue questionable.

Were this Law enacted to draw, or to drive, Dissenters into the National Church, the prohibition, of serving Civil Offices, was certainly intended for a PUNISHMENT. If the Law were enacted only to keep them out of those Stations, in which, by hurting the Church, they might violate the peace of the State, it was as certainly intended for a RESTRAINT, only; and becomes a *punishment* but by accident.

Now were it intended for a PUNISHMENT, the *Fine* is most just and equitable: And then the reasoning of the Body against the Member, "That the Legislature, by this Law, never intended, the Dissenter should receive Civil benefit and advantage," will not be without its force: For a *benefit* defeats the end of the Law.

But if the Test impose a RESTRAINT only, and it become a *punishment* but by accident, it may, without the least evil influence on the Law, become a *benefit* like-

wise by *accident*. Nay, to hinder this fair Chance would be highly unjust. For if, from the inevitable condition of human affairs, Particulars receive damage by a Law which respects the General, and which never had such damage in its intention, it is but fit they should have the same chance of a *benefit*, tho' equally without the intention of the Legislature.

Indeed, where the unprovided-for, or unthought-of, Consequence tends naturally to defeat the purpose of the Law, there the Interpreters of it will interpose, and declare, the advantage taken, to be against the Law; or, which amounts to the same thing, to be unsupported by it. But an accidental *benefit*, which arises from the *restraint* imposed, seems better calculated to effect the end of the *Test law*, (which is to keep the enemies of the Church from office in the State) than a *damage*, which might tempt them to violate their conscience: The *benefit* is, indeed, liable to abuse (and what is there in civil Institutions which is not?) but this abuse does

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not affect the purpose of the Law, which is to keep Sectaries out of Office. Yet here, to be just to all, let me observe, that the Dissenters will not seem to be in the properest circumstances to claim the advantage of the distinction here laid down in their favour, till they have a little reformed their ideas of a *Test-law*. For, they have, I think, in order to throw the greater odium upon it, (such as is the violating of a law of Nature) generally represented the prohibition, which it imposes, as inflicted for a *Punishment*. Now we have shewn, that if our Law-givers intended a *Punishment*, it defeats their very purpose, to connive at its becoming an *accidental benefit*. I only remark this for the sake of a general observation, that when Bodies of men, whether civil or ecclesiastical, suffer themselves to be misled by their passions and prejudices, their interests or resentments, the errors, they fall into, will always, sooner or later, turn upon themselves.

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Now it appears, both from Reason and Fact, that the Test is a *restrictive*, and not a *penal*, Law, in the proper meaning of these terms.

1. If a Law may be understood in two senses, one of which, supports its equity, while the other manifests its injustice, Reason dictates us to adopt the first. To ~~punish~~ *restrain* Sectaries, in order to bring them over to the national Religion is plainly wrong: But to *restrain* Sectaries from hurting the national Religion is as plainly right. Therefore, though the intention of the Legislature had in this case been ambiguous, yet the Law of a free People would admit of no other interpretation.

2. But the intention of the Legislature was not ambiguous: and the reason of the thing is supported by fact. When this Law was made, the *national Church* was deemed, in the public Opinion, to be in much danger both from Protestant and Popish Sectaries. In the early days of its establishment indeed, the Government had endeavoured

endeavoured to bring Both in o it; and many *penal Laws* were enacted for that purpose: But, at the time the *Test* became a Law, that visionary and unjust project had been long dropt; and Government was content to confine its care to the *protection*, rather than *extension* of the national Church. Had this latter point been their aim, it was to be effected only by the vigorous execution of the old *penal* Laws then in being. The *Test* added no force to those; but, on the contrary, greatly relaxed their efficacy, by disposing Government to repose their chief confidence, and seek their only remedy for disorders, in this new made-law.

From what hath been said, may be seen the strength of that Objection made to the *Test*, as it is now inforced to affect the interests of protestant Dissenters, viz. that its original and direct intention (a fact no one will deny) was to oppose to the machinations of Popery; and that therefore, they being included only by accident, may very reasonably be overlooked. But if the idea we have here given of the *Test-Law* be the

true, it is apparent, that the general, tho' not immediate purpose of the Legislature, in this Law, was to provide for the safety of the national Church, from what quarter soever the danger might arise. At one season it might spring from *Popery*; at another from *Puritanism*; but the various mischiefs were to be repelled, as they sprung up, with equal vigilance and vigour. But let no one by this imagine, that a comparison is here insinuated between *Popery* and *Puritanism*. As Religions, they can no more be compared together, than a body irrecoverably corrupted, with one but slightly tainted. Yet, with regard to the civil mischiefs which religious differences occasion, we have experienced, that the lightest matters often produce as great, as the most momentous: And the surplice and cross in baptism have alienated fellow Citizens against one another as fiercely as the tyrannic claim of a Supremacy, or the superstitious worship of dead men deified.

And now, since so much hath been said in behalf of the Dissenters, their Civil and Religious rights, they will bear to be reminded of

of one thing, in their turn; neither to abuse the *Toleration* themselves, nor to support others in abusing it. And the case I am about to give of One who, it is pretended, was thus supported, will, I hope, excuse this freedom. It is indeed the case of One who, without doing injury to our dissenting Brethren, can never be reckoned in their number. The miserable buffoon, of whom I would be understood to speak, was suffered for near thirty years together to turn all RELIGION and MORALITY into ridicule; once, and for some time twice a week, in a licensed place of Devotion in the Capital of the Kingdom. A matter so much to the disgrace of Society, that They, on whom the scandal fell, thought proper to give out, that a vigorous prosecution of this Offender was directed to be commenced; but that when it was known, the body of Dissenters took the alarm, as if the *Law of Toleration* was in danger, since this Impostor acted under the common protection of a License from *Hicks's Hall*.

Yet, whoever hindered the prosecution could not but confess, that this was a very

vile *abuse* of a most sacred Law: They could not but apprehend that for an abused Law to screen the Abuser from punishment, was making Law to EXECUTE itself, in a very different sense from what crafty Politicians have sometimes projected.

But the abuse of Civil Laws being of two kinds; one, of the *Liberty they bestow*; the other, of the *restraint they impose*; the Dissenters had been possessed with such a panic of the latter, that as, in their conceptions, Civil Laws must be abused one way or other, the abuse of the *liberty they bestow* was the lesser evil of the two. But the history of mankind may instruct us, that no Laws can continue longer in vigour, and so, in credit, than while both kinds of *abuse* are restrained or punished as they arise. And what should hinder this vindication of Civil LAWS? The punishment of *either* abuse, indifferently, contributes to the suppression of *both*; and so holds the balance even. It is *then* that the BODY-POLITIC becomes unable to perform its natural functions, when the
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the several branches of its combined Powers cease, or remit to counteract one another.

However the prevailing System in modern Politics hath been, to connive at *abuses*, lest the redress of them should produce *new abuses*; and this especially in matters which concern LIBERTY, of all human blessings the thing most subject to abuse; as we have the miserable advantage to experience in the present condition of it, both civil and religious; which good and wise men abhor the sight of, and tremble for the issue; as well knowing that this ill-judged connivance at *particular abuses* will, in no long time, necessitate Government, even to save itself from ruin, to provide some GENERAL LAW for the PREVENTION of *abuses*; and then there will remain, to fill up the measure, only one *abuse* more, to be put in practice, and *that* the easiest of all, whenever Ministers may be so disposed; I mean, the *abuse* of that *general preventive* Law, to the destruction of Liberty itself; which Law, the Guardians of Liberty had, as their last effort, so improvident-

ly and so improperly contrived for its support.

But having said so much in behalf of the *Law of Toleration*, let me not be understood as if I could suppose, or would insinuate, that this Law has altered the nature of the crime going under the name of SCHISM, which is an unnecessary separation from the national Church; or, because it has taken all civil punishment from Schismatics, that therefore *Schism* is become a harmless and an empty name: and that, the *Law of Toleration*, like the Law in favour of WITCHES, had dissipated only a frightful Fantom. It is true, that, in both Cases, the Legislature acted for the same end, the restraint of injustice; but it was on very different principles; In the first case, they took off civil punishment from a *real crime*, not cognizable by a human Judicatory: and, in the latter, they removed an opprobrium from the Statute Book, which expressed a sanguinary resentment against an *imaginary one*.

- *Schism,*

Schism, or a causeless separation from the national Church, is a crime, which, on all the principles of Law and Reason, deserves condign punishment. But, of this separation, whether with or without cause, there is no adequate Judge, but that Power who can distinguish between a well and an ill informed Conscience. Very justly therefore did this Free Government remit the question to a wiser Tribunal. But in so doing it did not mitigate, but, by its indulgence, rather aggravate the Guilt, wherever it should be found, hereafter, to exist.

Schism therefore is no less a Crime now, that the Law consigns its punishment to a proper judicature, than it was when Civil Authority, blindly and ineffectually, interfered to vindicate the honour of Religion from this unhappy Scandal.

Hitherto, we have been considering what *reputation* accrues to the Church of England, from the establishment of this inestimable Law; and what *benefits* may

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further accrue to it by the prudent conduct of our Clergy, in its support

11. What my Subject leads me to say further will be more particularly addressed to these Ministers of Religion. They are surrounded with Enemies from various quarters ; and insulted both by the attacks of INFIDELITY and FANATICISM.

Their defence therefore, is indeed of necessity to be as much diversified ; but still under the conduct, and with the sole Arms, of TRUTH. For it is not the honour of a fantastic *Sect of Philosophy* which We are intrusted to support ; better committed to the care of those who exercise the talents of its old Patrons, the SOPHISTS ; neither is it the credit of a *traditional Orthodoxy*, which, some of those who are called FATHERS of the Church, have, of old, defended with the like arts and arms : But it is the simple GOSPEL OF JESUS, equally abhorrent of *refinement* and *deceit*.

I cannot, nor indeed have I any just reason to suspect, that the English Clergy,

gy, will dishonour so noble a Cause by any premeditated fraud. Yet the most Upright, in the heat of controversy, provoked and perhaps alarmed at the extravagant powers which Libertines and Fanatics have reciprocally ascribed to REASON and to GRACE, have been but too apt to run into destructive extremes, depreciating, and even annihilating, sometimes the One, and sometimes the Other, as best served the purpose they were then pursuing. Of which egregious folly, their adversaries, we must observe, have never failed to take advantage, by turning their own ill-fashioned and worse fabricated Arms, against them: And this was easily done; since *Revealed Religion* derives its whole support from the joint operation of these two Principles, *Reason* and *Grace*, acting on the human mind with equal and unremitted vigour.

But to understand more sensibly the mischiefs arising from such ill judged defences of Religion, I shall set before the Reader a capital Example of each of

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those EXTREMES, of which we are now speaking. From whence we may learn the use and necessity of keeping within that equal MEAN, which most effectually serves to detect and expose the errors of either Adversary.

It hath ever been amongst the principal arts of Infidelity to make the most extravagant encomiums on HUMAN REASON; and, consequently, to profess the utmost regard and reverence for, what Unbelievers are pleased to call, *natural Religion*. Under this cover, by the poorest sophistry and hypocrisy imaginable, they are used to batter and undermine *Revelation*. But now, What expedient think you, did some warm defenders of it employ to uphold its credit? You will naturally say, they took care to moderate the extravagant representations of these false friends of *Reason* and *natural Religion*; by marking out the just bounds of the human Faculties, and shewing, how far Reason extends her jurisdiction, and in what, she herself prescribes Submission: by explaining how
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necessary a foundation *natural Religion* is to the *Revealed*; how it coincides with it, is compleated by it, and so inseparably annexed to it, that nothing can hurt the One which does not injuriously affect the Other; there being no objection, which the Logic of misapplied *reason* can bring against *Revealed Religion*, which does not hold at least equally strong against the *Natural*.

This they did, you say, because This they ought to do. Alas! they took a very different course. They declaimed against *human Reason*; they depressed it as extravagantly as their Adversaries had advanced it. — Should you be so foolish, they told you, as to take it for your Guide, it would lead to nothing but to sin and misery: that the Gospel disclaimed it, and went entirely on the Surer ground of FAITH: that, it being confessed so impotent in defence of *truths revealed*, it would be absurd to rely on its capacity to discover *truths unrevealed*. Hence, they assured you, that the Deists boasted System

of *natural Religion* was a Chimera, and what, under that name, they recommended to the adoration of their followers, was an Impostor, made up of just so much of the *revealed* as was of use to them in combating the rest. Finally, they said, that all religious knowledge of the Deity, and of man's relation to him, were *revealed*, and had descended traditionally down, (though broken and disjointed in so long a passage) from the first Man; who received it as he came out of the forming hands of his Creator.

When our Enemies had gotten these indiscreet friends of *Revelation* at this advantage, they changed the attack, (for all Arms are indifferent to *them*, but in proportion to their instant power of doing mischief) and now tried how *Revelation* was to be further shaken, on these new and extravagant principles of its Defenders.

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Accordingly a certain masked Buffoon undertook to turn *one part* of this Paradox against them, in a Discourse to prove that *Revelation was not founded on Argument*; and tempered his irony with so grave and solemn an air, that many good men mistook this arch-enemy of all godliness to be, at worst, but an over-warm promoter of it. He had two ends in this worthy attempt, the one, to do himself honour in discrediting Religion; the other, to excite and encourage Fanatics to discredit it the more.

A fairer Writer against Religion, because a more open, took up the *other part* of the Paradox, with the same righteous design; and as the Buffoon had undertaken to shew that *Revealed Religion was not founded in argument*, so the grave Declaimer assumes to prove that *natural Religion was not founded in common Sense*: for its existence depending on the moral attributes of the Deity, his justice and goodness, this broacher of the last runnings of the *First Philosophy* labours to shew that justice and goodness belong not to him, whose essence

sence consists in the *natural* attributes of *wisdom* and *power* only. Hence, for *natural Religion*, he slurs in upon us, an *irreligious NATURALISM*. And now *Revelation*, being deprived of its foundation, *natural Religion*, and of its best defence and ornament, *human Reason*, lies a scorn to Unbelievers, and a prey to Fanatics and Enthusiasts.

But all this hath not yet taught these wayward Divines, wisdom. We have lately seen them attempting to support in good earnest the wretched paradox which Mr. — had so mischievously advanced in jest. And yet one should be utterly at a loss to guess in what the wit or wisdom of it lay: whether advanced in jest or in earnest. But a mischievous heart will at any time risque the reputation of its head-piece to give the alarm to sober piety; and a warm head discloses, without fear or wit, the rancour of its bosom, to vilify and bespatter superior Reason. Otherwise, to ask, *Whether Christianity was founded*

founded in Reason or in Faith, would be seen just as wise a question, as *Whether St. Paul's Clock was founded in Mechanism or in Motion?* Since, if it be found to have motion, we necessarily conclude that motion to be regulated by *mechanism*: So, if the vital principle of Christianity be *Faith*, we necessarily conclude it to be such a *Faith*, as was formed, and may be supported, on the rules and principles of *human Reason*. A wild Indian, perhaps, might imagine that the *Clock* was animated by a Spirit; and an Enthusiast, still wilder than he, may, for ought I know, conclude that *Christianity* rises only out of internal impulse. But surely none but a Buffoon or a Fanatic would, for his credit in jest, or for his interest in good earnest, discard the use of Reason in consulting for his *future* happiness, when he has already found it so usefull in procuring his *present*. Both future and present are acquired by the right adaption of *means* to *ends*: and this adaption, I suppose, will be confessed by all to be in the sole province of

of *Reason*. Nor has this heaven-appointed Guide ever given any just cause of complaint or jealousy. When men see themselves bewildered, they ought to suspect themselves: and, I believe, on enquiry, they will always find that they had been directing *Reason* when they should have been directed by her. But the Passions and Affections, which have occasioned her discredit, go on, in their illusions, to excite our distrust.

Again, these *well-meaning* men, while they were thus pushing the common Adversary, with these imaginary advantages gained by the depression of *human reason*, did not advert to the mischiefs they were letting in, at the opposite quarters of *Superstition* and *Fanaticism*.

POPERY can only stand and flourish on the foundation of *implicite faith*; and the fervours of ENTHUSIASM soon rise into madness when unchecked by *Reason*. The Papist expects you should renounce your Understanding before he will undertake

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to reconcile you to the Church of Rome : but, indeed, when that is over, he will encourage you to take up as much of it again, as will serve you to justify your Apostasy. The quarrel which the Fanatic has to it is more serious. He is ever feeling its ill effects; and therefore his aversion to it is immortal. When IGNA- LIUS LOYOLA was in the Meridian of his Fervours, some of the writings of ERASMUS chanced to fall into his hands. He was at first seduced, by the charms of the composition, to look into them ; but finding they had, before he was aware, insensibly damped the inflammations of his Zeal; he cast them from him with abhorrence and execration. The very same disaster, Mr. J. WESLEY informs us, once befell himself, in his converse with the sober followers of Erasmus ; insomuch that he was soon forced, he tells us, to avoid them, as the *bane of all Religion*. “ I avoid that *bane of all Religion*, the company of good sort of men, as they are called. These insensibly undermine all my resolution, and

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and steal away what little ZEAL I have (1)."

If this be true, though they steal but trash, yet they leave him poor indeed; as his quondam Master has lately observed to a friend,

"Your strictures upon Messieurs of the
"Foundery, and the Tabernacle, &c. are
"very just. These gentlemen seem to
"have no other bottom to stand upon but
"that of ZEAL (2)". But against so dangerous an Enemy as SOBER SENSE, the Fanatic cannot be too carefully guarded. And therefore, he never thinks himself secure from the mischiefs of *Reason*, till he has, with the same hoarse clamours that the metamorphosed Clowns in the Fable, pursued Latona and her godlike Issue, driven away from the neighbourhood of the Saints, both *Reason* and her fair and celestial Offspring, NATURAL RELIGION and HUMAN LEARNING.

(1) Journ. from August 12, 1738. to November 3, 1739. p. 31.

(2) Mr. W. Law's Collection of Letters, &c. p. 129.

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Mr. J. WESLEY, who is ready to exhibit to us every feature of Fanaticism in its turn, has, I fear, been kept so long on the Scene, as to tire out his Audience; he shall therefore be only once more shewn to testify, in a word or two, his civilities to *natural Reason* and *natural Religion*. As to the first, he frankly tells us, The Father of *lies* was the Father of *reasonings* also: "I observed, (says he) every day more and more, the advance *Satan* had gained over us. Many were thrown into idle *reasonings* — And again—Many of our Sisters are shaken. Betty and Esther H. are *grievously torn* by *reasonings* (3)." — His civilities to NATURAL RELIGION, and to that eminent Writer who has so well explained the nature of this first great gift of God to Man, follow next: "Meeting with a French man of New Orleans (says Mr. Wesley) he gave us a full and particu-

(3) Journa. from Nov. 1, 1739. to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 8. and 17.

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"lar account of the *Chicasaws*: — And
 "hence we could not but remark What is
 "THE RELIGION OF NATURE, properly so
 "called, or that Religion which flows from
 "natural Reason, unassisted by Revelation."
 He then speaks of their manners in War.
 Their way of living in Peace follows in
 these words, "They do nothing but eat
 "and drink and smoak from Morning
 "till Night, and in a manner from Night
 "till Morning. For they rise at any
 "hour of the night when they wake, and
 "after eating and drinking as much as
 "they can, go to sleep again. See THE
 "RELIGION OF NATURE truly DELINE-
 "ATED(4)." What is most curious in
 this account is, that Mr. Wesley professes
 to shew us what that Religion is which is
 properly called natural, or that which flows
 from NATURAL REASON unassisted by RE-
 VELATION, and yet he here gives us, in its
 stead, only man's natural manners which

(4) Journ. from his embarking for Georgia to
 his return to London, p. 44-5,

flow

flow solely from the *passions and appetites*; in an example, where *Reason* may be rather said to have a capacity of existence than actually to exist, as being alike inert and void of power whether the *Chicasaw* be waking or asleep.

As to HUMAN LEARNING, If the zealous Mr. W. Law does not assault this more rudely than his forward Pupil has insulted NATURAL RELIGION, yet he returns much oftener to the Charge. The last Legacies, which this bountiful Gentleman hath bestowed upon the Public, are *A collection of Letters, &c.* and *An Address to the Clergy, &c.* In these two Works the hapless Author of the *Divine Legation, &c.* is pointed at, on every occasion of *abuse*, and held up as the grand Apostate from *Grace to Human Reason*; and this chiefly, for denying (what indeed, I neither deny nor affirm, for I take it to be nonsense) That
 “ *Divine Inspiration is ESSENTIAL to*
 “ *Man’s first created state, and vainly*
 “ *thinking to find out a middle way, be-*
 “ *tween this and no inspiration at all,*
 “ *namely, that the Spirit’s ordinary influence*

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"*occasionally assists the faithfull* (4)." For this, and for some few things besides, such as a charge of Spinozism on his beloved Behmenism, I have the honour to be plentifully, though *spiritually* railed at, whenever he fancies he sees me in the retinue of HUMAN LEARNING.

He lays it down as a Postulatum "That
" whatever comes not IMMEDIATELY
" from GOD can have nothing *godly* in it.
" Therefore what comes IMMEDIATE-
" LY from SELF, such as *natural Rea-*
" *son*, however outwardly coloured, can
" have no better a nature within than the
" very Works of the Devil (5)."

Now the fruit of *natural reason* being *human Learning*; (indeed, according to this account, more properly than men were aware of called *prophane Learning*) he thus descants upon it.

(4) See p. 12. and 25 of the *Address to the Clergy*.
(5) Ibid. p. 57.

First of all, he assures us, it has nothing to do with Religion. "Where can God's Kingdom be come, but where every other power, but his, is at an end, and driven out? — What now have Parts and Literature and the natural Abilities of man to do here? just as much as they can do at the Resurrection of the dead; for all that is to be done here is nothing else but *Resurrection* and *Life*. — Yet vain man would be thought to do *something* in this *kingdom of Grace* — because he has happened to be made a Scholar, has run through all the Languages and Histories, has been long exercised in conjectures and criticisms, and has his head full of all notions, theological, poetical, and philosophical, as a Dictionary is full of all sort of words. Now let this simple question decide the whole matter here: Has this great Scholar any more power of saying to this mountain, *Be thou removed hence and cast into the*

Sea.

"Sea, than the illiterate Christian hath (6)."
 To this reasoning against *human Learning*,
 in its use to Religion, what can be op-
 posed? It is very certain it can neither
raise the dead, nor remove Mountains.

But *human Learning* is not only useless
 in Religion, but is of infinite mischief.

For 1. It nourisheth PRIDE. "The
 "piercing Critic may, and naturally
 "will, grow in *pride*, as fast as his
 "skill in words discovers itself. And
 "every kind of knowledge that shews the O-
 "rator, the Disputer, the Commentator,
 "the Historian, his own powers and abi-
 "lities, are the same temptation to him
 "that Eve had from the serpent," &c. (7)
 2. It nourisheth Contention. — "Gram-
 "mar, Logic, and Criticism, each know-
 "eth nothing of Scripture but its words;
 "bringeth forth nothing but its *own wif-*
 "dom of words, and a Religion of wran-
 "gle, hatred, and contention about the
 "meaning of them (8)."

(6) Address, p. 96-7.

(7) Letters, p. 187.

(8) Address, p. 123.

3. It turneth Religion to a trade. —

“ Where *self*, or the *natural man* is become great in *religious Learning*, there, the greater the Scholar, the more firmly will he be fixed in their Religion, *whose God is their belly* (9).”

4. It is the abomination of desolation. —

“ *Genius* and *Learning* entered into the pale of the Church — Behold, if ever, the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place. —

“ Christ has nowhere spoken one single word, or given the least power to Logic, Learning, or the *natural powers* of man IN HIS KINGDOM (10).” By this,

we see that *Christ's Kingdom* may be usurped as well by *Classic Learning* as by *Church Discipline*. It is certain, our modern ideas of *religious Liberty* can consist with neither of them, for this *Liberty* claims an exemption both from REASON and OBEDIENCE.

5. It chuseth darkness rather than light. —

“ But now, Who can more reject this di-

(9) Ibid. p. 59.

(10) Ibid. p. 114.

“ vine

“ vine light [i. e. the *light of the world*,
 “ reilluminated by the *blessed Jacob*, as he
 “ calls him] or more plainly choose dark-
 “ ness instead of it, than he who seeks
 “ to have his mind enriched, the facul-
 “ ties of his fallen soul cultivated, by
 “ the literature of Poets, Orators, Philo-
 “ sophers, Sophists, Sceptics and Critics,
 “ born and bred up in the worship and
 “ praises of Idol-Gods and Goddess-
 “ es. ”

6. Finally it is a total *Apostacy* from
 God and Goodness. ——— “ The practice
 “ of all Churches for many ages, has had
 “ recourse to *Learning, Art, and Science*,
 “ to qualify Ministers for the preaching of
 “ the Gospel ——— To this more than to
 “ any one other cause, is the *great Apostacy*
 “ of all Christendom to be attri-
 “ buted. ——— The death of all that is good
 “ in the Soul, have now and always had
 “ their chief nourishment and support
 “ from the sense of the merit and suffi-

“ciency of literal accomplishments —
 “And the very *life of Jesus in the Soul* is
 “by few people less earnestly desired, or
 “more hard to be practised than by great
 “*Wits, Classical-Critics, Linguists, Histo-*
 “*rians, and Orators* in holy orders (2).” —
 “And again — This empty *letter-learn-*
 “*ed knowledge*, which the natural man
 “can as easily have of the Sacred Scripture
 “and human matters, as of any other
 “books or human affairs, this being ta-
 “ken for *divine knowlege* has spread such
 “darkness and delusion all over Christen-
 “dom as may be reckoned no less than a
 ♥ GENERAL APOSTASY from the Gospel-
 “state of *divine illumination* (3).” We
 see by this, that the grand mistake of scho-
 lars has hitherto been, in supposing, that
 the true sense of Scripture is to be disco-
 vered by the application of those Princi-
 ples which enables us to find out the mean-
 ing contained in other ancient Books.

(2) *Letters*, p. 37.

(3) *Address*, p. 94.

And

And now the good man having worked up his *enthusiasm* into a poetical ferment, (for, as it has been said, that a Poet is an Enthusiast in jest, so, he shews us, that an Enthusiast may be a Poet in good earnest) he adorns these powerful reasonings with a string of as beauteous Similes in discredit of *human Learning*.

1. It is compared to the *fall of man*. —

“ Look (says he) at the present state of
 “ Christendom, glorying in the light of
 “ *greek and roman Learning*, and you will
 “ see the *fall* of the present Church from
 “ its *first Gospel-state*, to have much like-
 “ nesses to the *fall of the first di-vine man*,
 “ from the glory of paradifical innocence,
 “ and heavenly purity, into an earthly state
 “ and bestial life of worldly craft and ser-
 “ pentine subtilty (4).”

2. It is compared to the *old Serpent* —

“ What a poverty of sense in such, to set
 “ themselves down at the feet of a *Master*
 “ *Tully*, and a *Master Aristotle*! who

(4) Ibid, p. 98.

“ only differ from the meanest of all other
 “ corrupt men, as the *teaching Serpent* dif-
 “ fered from his fellow-animals, by be-
 “ ing *more subtle than all the beasts of the*
 “ *field*(5).”

3. It is compared to the *Tower of Ba-
 bel* — “ A *Tower of Babel* may, to its
 “ builder's eyes, seem to hide its head
 “ in the clouds, but as to its *reaching of*
 “ *Heaven*, it is no nearer to that than the
 “ *Earth* on which it stands. It is thus
 “ with all the buildings of Man's wif-
 “ dom — He may take the *logic* of Ari-
 “ stotle, add to that the *rhetoric* of Tully,
 “ and then ascend as high as he can on
 “ the ladder of *Poetic* imagination, yet no
 “ more is done to the reviving the lost life
 “ of God in his Soul, than by a *Tower*
 “ of Brick and Mortar, to reach *Hea-*
 “ *ven*(6).”

4. Again, it is compared to *Idolatry* —
 “ What is it that most of all hinders the
 “ *death of the old man*? — It is the fan-
 “ cied riches of *Parts*, the glitter of ge-

(5) Ibid. p. 139-40.

(6) Ibid. p. 104.

“ *ninus*,

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“*nus*, the flights of *imagination*, the glo-
 “*ry of Learning*, and the self-conceited
 “*strength of natural Reason*: These are
 “the *strong-holds* of fallen Nature, the
 “*Master-builders of Pride’s Temple*, and
 “which, as so many *Priests*, keep up the
 “*daily worship of IDOL SELF* (7).”

But, now his poetical Enthusiasm has
 blazed itself out ; and he comes again to
 himself.—We know how the lucid inter-
 vals of Fanaticism are wont to be employed ;
 generally in covering the madness of the
Hot fit with the most deliberate and un-
 blushing falsehoods of the *Cold*.

From what hath past, rash Divines
 might be apt to charge this holy man, so
 meek of Spirit, with *Enthusiasm*,----with
 a brutal spite to *Reason*, --- and with more
 than Vandalic rage against *human Learn-*
ing. But they wrong him greatly. 1.
 As to *Enthusiasm*, he says,——“What an
 “argument would this be ; *Enthusiasts*
 “have made a bad use of the doctrine of

(7) Ibid. p. 110.

being

“ being led by the spirit of God; ergo, He
 “ is *Enthusiastical* who preaches up the
 “ doctrine of being led by the spirit of God.
 “ Now absurd as this is, was any of my
 “ Accusers, as high in *genius*, as bulky
 “ in *Learning*, as *Colossus* was in Stature,
 “ he would be at a loss to bring a strong-
 “ er argument than this to prove me an
 “ *Enthusiast* or an abetter of them (8).”
 This is plainly unanswerable, unless you
 you read, as his accuser wrote it, for —
 “ who preaches up the doctrine — who abuses
 the doctrine.

2. “ Another Charge (says he) upon
 “ me, equally false, and, I may say, more
 “ senseless, is that I am a declared Enemy
 “ to the use of Reason in Religion. And,
 “ why? Because in all my writings I
 “ teach that Reason is to be denied. I own
 “ it, and this, because Christ has said,
 “ *Whoever will come after me, let him deny*
 “ *himself*. For how can a man deny him-
 “ self without denying his reason, unless

(8) Ibid. p. 51.

D d

“ reason

"*reason* be no part of himself (9)?" Now I am at a loss to know, How any one can become an enemy to other more declared, than by *denying* or *renouncing* that other. Were I to *deny* my Sovereign, I should be soon taught to know, that he considered me as his enemy, and would probably treat me accordingly. But Sovereign-Reason has no Attorney-General, unless perhaps, it be that *Colossus* he speaks of, and so loudly defies.— However if human *Reason* can argue no better than Mr. Law, I am ready to *deny* her too.—But a Man's *self*, I have been taught, has a two-fold acceptation; his *Reason* may be called, *himself*, and so may his *Passions*. If therefore he be commanded to *deny himself*, I should conclude, it was not his better self, his *Reason*, but the worse, his *Passions*, to which the divine command refers.

3. Then as to *human Learning*, the Charge, he tells us, is as *false and senseless* as the rest. — "Shew me a Scholar

" as full of *learning* as the Vatican is of
 " Books, and he will be just as likely
 " to give all that he hath for the *Gospel-*
 " *Pearl*, as he would be, if he was as rich
 " as Cræsus. LET NO ONE HERE IMA-
 " GINE I AM WRITING AGAINST ALL
 " HUMAN LITERATURE, *arts, and scien-*
 " *ces*, or that I wish, the World to be
 " without them. *I am no more an Enemy*
 " *to them*, than to the common usefull
 " labours of life. *It is literal Learning,*
 " *verbal contention, and critical strife a-*
 " *bout the things of God that I charge*
 " with folly, and mischief to Religion.
 " And, in this, I have all learned Chris-
 " tendom, both Popish and Protestant, on
 " my side; for they both agree in charg-
 " ing each other, with a bad and false
 " Gospel-state, because of that, which
 " their Learning, Logic, and criticism do
 " for them (10)." There are no such pro-
 " ficients in *sophistry* as the declared ene-
 " mies of *Reason*; nor any so dextrous

(10) Ibid. p. 152.

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in legerdemain as the meekest bunglers in the mechanic Arts. — He is not an Enemy, he tells us, to *human literature*, but to *literal learning* only: That is, he approves of Learning contained in Letters, but not of Letters contained in Learning. The truth is, he would willingly in this distress take shelter, did he know how, even in the *graceless* company of Men of *Taste*; who, like him, to hide their ignorance, are always scoffing at the Pedantry of *literal learning and verbal criticism*, with the same good sense that an Artificer would abuse the Tools he works with. — Again, do *Popish* and *Protestant* Disputers ever say to one another, — *You support a bad and false Gospel by Learning, Logic, and Criticism?* Do not their reciprocal accusations of one another's errors turn upon the *want of Learning, Logic, and Criticism?* Or was Mr. Law, indeed, so ignorant as he pretends, when he supposes there are now *two* Kinds of Learning, Logic, and Criticism, a *Popish* and a *Protestant*; instead of *one*,
founded:

founded and perfect on Principles, held by both Parties in common? All that they charge on each other is the *abuse* of these Principles.

But to draw towards an end with this furious Behmenist — In all this ribaldry, the only chance he has of misleading illiterate and weak Mortals, is by the repeated insinuations, that all religious dissensions are owing to these mischief-makers, *Reason* and *Human Learning* that, in their absence, there is a perfect accord in Religion. But this is the fiction of Bards and Enthusiasts; who never saw, but in poetic, or extatic Vision, that time when,

“ Christians and Jews one heavy Sabbath keep;

“ And all the western World believe
“ and sleep,

Before mortals either writ or read, the quarrels of Dunces were as fierce as those of Wits. In Religion, the dis-

sensations amongst the *irrational* were as implacable as those amongst the *Rational Sects*. And if, in these miserable conflicts, the wounds of the latter went deeper, it was because their force was greater and their weapons better.

To conclude, When I reflect on the wonderful infatuation of this ingenious man, who has spent a long life in hunting after, and, with an incredible appetite, devouring the trash dropt from every species of Mysticism, it puts me in mind of what Travellers (1) tell us of a horrid Fanaticism in the East, where the Devotee makes a solemn vow never to taste any food but what has passed through the entrails of some impure or Savage Animal. Hence their whole lives are passed (like Mr. Law's amongst his Ascetics) in Woods and Forests, far removed from the converse of mankind.

(1) Tavernier,

And

And now, to turn back again to our FREETHINKER. As professed an Adorer as he would be thought of his Sovereign Mistress, REASON, we shall see; that, like the Pagans of old, when their Gods proved unkind, he can, himself on occasion, treat his favourite IDOL with the utmost ignominy and contempt; for as one of the freest of this holy-Brotherhood has confessed ——— *When Reason is against a Man, why then ——— a Man will be against Reason.*

They had so long boasted of the Power of this their favorite Idol, they had so loudly trumpeted the virtue of her Orient beam in driving away those Fantoms conjured up by *Revelation* in the dark Regions of *Superstition*, that the able and sober Divine thought it high time to check their impertinent triumphs; and shew the World on which side REASON had declared herself. In order to this, they enforced and illustrated; (defecated from the dross of the Schools) the invincible arguments of their Predecessors in support of *Revelation*;

Revelation; to which they added large and noble accessions of their own. What was now to be done? The Deist could not directly degrade that Reason which he had already enthroned. Yet finding her in this service, he thought he had a right to insinuate that she was no better than she should be, and had, like a common Prostitute, changed her name to **POLEMIC DIVINITY**.

It must be confessed, that the unguarded manner in carrying on theologic controversy had subjected it to much deserved censure. This, joined to the sort of Learning employed in diverse of the more early defences of Religion, where both the fashion and standard smelt strongly of the barbarous form and base alloy of the **SCHOOLS**, gave them a large handle to run down all that followed. Some parts of **POLEMIC DIVINITY**, appeared, on their principles, to be trifling, others bore hard upon their conclusions; so they took advantage of what was faulty in itself, and of what appeared impertinent to them, to ridicule the whole. Hence *Polemic Divinity* became the whet-

their wit, and the constant Butt of their malice. As the credit of Deism advanced, this cant grew familiar, and spread itself into the fashionable World. Nor could the divine genius of those Masters of Reason, a GROTIUS, or an EPISCOPIUS, a HOOKER, or a CHILLINGWORTH, when once nick-named *Polemical Divines*, hinder them from being enrolled amongst *Scotists* and *Thomists* and the veriest rabble of the Schoolmen, by some of the more ignorant or indiscreet of all Parties. But what is most to be lamented is, when we see a well-meaning Clergyman of affected taste and real ignorance, go out of his depth, as well as out of his Profession, to exert his small talents of ridicule on the same subject, merely for the sake of being in the fashion; and, free from all malice as well as wit, treat *Polemical Divinity* (which, for all the hard name, is indeed nothing but a critical examination of the doctrines of our Faith) as cavalierly as ever did Collins or Tindal, Lords Shaftsbury or Bolingbroke.

Yet

Yet had these small-dealers in second-hand Ridicule but the least adverted on their doings, they must have seen the absurdity as well as mischief of so unweighed and wanton a conduct.

Their ADVERSARIES had sufficient provocation, and were not without a plausible pretence for their quarrel with *Polemic Divinity*, whether it was employed in supporting Revelation in general against the common Enemy, or in defending the Gospel truths against the errors of Sectaries.

The *provocation* they had received was not small. The Friends of *Revelation* having a Religion to defend which was founded on the Authority of a Divine Messenger, who appealed to *Miracles* performed, and to *Prophecies* fulfilled. They supposed the most simple and natural method was to prove the truth of this Religion, as all other human transactions are proved, by *FACTS*. This was at length so invincibly performed, that their Enemies were forced to have recourse to their favourite Deity, *REASON*, to undo the knot and free them from their Embarras. Her power they had long objected:

objected to believers as the only barrier against *Superstition*; and now was the time to press it home. "You urge us with *facts*, say they, and the *testimony of Antiquity*; Supports too slender to bear the unnatural load of *Revelation*. A thing impossible in itself, as it contradicts the established order of Providence: a thing impossible under the Bible-representation of it, as several passages in that Book directly oppose our common notices of God's Attributes. Would you have us give credit to your fond notions of Revelation, let us see you support it on our common-principles of Philosophy, natural, dialectic, and metaphysical. When you have done this, we shall be satisfied, for on these principles only will REASON allow us to submit." This was what they pretended to expect; and Divines took them at their word, and immediately entered upon, and soon completed a defence of Revelation, on this new prescribed method of Proof. With what success, their prevarication, of which I am going to speak, amply evinces. For

no sooner was that done which they had to vainly represented as impossible, than they changed their tone, and now attempted to ridicule it as a very impertinent atchievement. "It is astonishing (says the Goliath of their party) how Divines could take so much silly pains to establish mystery on metaphysics, revelation on philosophy, and matters of fact on abstract Reasoning. Religion, such as the Christian, which appeals to facts, must be proved as all other facts that pass for authentic are proved. If they are thus proved, the Religion will prevail without the assistance of so much profound Reasoning(2)." This was what the learned Divine got for his pains! not only to have his Compliance laughed at, but, what is the common attendant on Ridicule, to have it falsified. *Divines*, we see, are represented, as *applying their metaphysics, philosophy and profound reason, to Prophecies,*

(2) L. Bollingbroke's *Letters concerning the Study and Use of History.*

and

and Miracles. How gross the misrepresentation! They had more wit, they had more honesty than to take that *silly pains*. They employed their Philosophy as became such Masters of Reason, not to matters of *fact*, but of *right*. It was pretended that God could not give a *Revelation*; that he could not select a *Chosen People*; that he could not accept a *vicarious Attonement*: And against these bold assertions, the Christian Divine directed all the force and evidence of true Philosophy. With what success, a better Posterity shall tell with gratitude. This is the *spite*, I meant, which Unbelievers bear to that part of *Polemic Divinity*, which concerns the being and nature of Revelation.

The *plausible pretence* they had to ridicule and condemn the rest, which is employed in settling and adjusting the various *MODES* of Religion, is next to be considered. These men holding the very *essence* of Religion to be visionary and fantastic, laughed, and naturally enough, to see such bustle made about its *modes*; which, up-

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on their ideas, was a dispute, about *Nothing once removed.*

But now, to see the Friends of Revelation disposed to laugh with them, and to ridicule either one or other of these parts of *Polemic Divinity*, is not amongst the least of those absurd perversities, in which common life, at present, so much abounds. For is that which makes *our Hope not ashamed*, and supports the *Faith which is counted for righteousness*, the natural, the reasonable object of a *Christian man's* contempt? But as this latter part is more generally known by the name of *Polemic Divinity*, and is the more usual topic of fashionable ridicule, it may be proper to add a word or two on the extreme folly of imitating the airs of our Adversaries, on this occasion. We have observed that the Freethinker was not without some excuse in laughing at this part of religious *Controversy*, since, on his ideas, it was disputing about the *modes* of a *non-entity*. But the Christian Divine takes

takes his *Faith* for a Reality; and therefore can never deem the *modes* of it to be indifferent; but must hold, that, of the various opinions arising from thence, some may be useful and some hurtful to Society: So that when, about these *modes*, Churches differ, they become as reasonably the subject of serious enquiry, as any other real entities whatsoever; and have their importance in a just proportion to their good or bad influence on Truth and Virtue. In a word, POLEMIC DIVINITY is, in the fancy of a Libertine, a squabble for preference between two Falsehoods; in which, there is room enough for ridicule: But on the Principles of a Believer, it is a contest between Truth and Falsehood; in which there is nothing to be laughed at, though much to be lamented.

III. But there was never yet extravagance, either of Unbeliever or Fanatic, which the over zealous Advocate of Religion and sober Piety hath not unhappily

opposed by a contrary, and frequently by as mischievous, an extreme.

We have seen how unwarily some of them have been drawn in to depreciate and to degrade *human Reason*, when their Adversaries had too extravagantly advanced it. They have at other times advanced it as extravagantly, when their Adversaries were in an humour to vilify and disgrace it.

To understand what I mean, we must go a little back in the history of Fanaticism: And They, whom this matter greatly concerns, will need no other proof of the folly of such conduct than what arises from the historical detection of it.

The REDEMPTION OF MANKIND by the death of Christ and the SACRIFICE of himself upon the Cross, together with its consequent Doctrine of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH-ALONE, were the great Gospel-Principles on which PROTESTANTISM was founded, on the first general Separation from the *Church of Rome*: by some, perhaps, carried

ried too far, in their zeal for setting it at a mortal distance from the Popish Doctrine of *Merits*; the Puritanic schism amongst us being made on a pretence that the Church of England had not receded far enough from *Rome*. However, as Gospel-Principles, they were held to be the badge of true Protestantism by all: When the Puritans, first driven by Persecution into Faction, and by Faction heated into Enthusiasm, carried the doctrine of *Justification by Faith alone* into a dangerous and impure *Antinomianism*. For it is of the very nature of Enthusiasm to run all its notions to extremes. The speculation was soon after reduced to practice, by means of that Roguery which always mixes itself with Enthusiasm, when once *the Fanatic* becomes engaged in Politics. The confusions which ensued are well known: And no small share of them have been ascribed to this impious abuse of the doctrine of *justification by Faith alone*; first, by de-

preciating MORALITY, and then by dispensing with it.

When the Constitution was restored, and had brought into credit those few learned Divines whom the madness of the preceeding times had driven into obscurity, the Church of England, still smarting with the wounds it had received from the *abuse* of the great Gospel Principles of FAITH, very wisely laboured to restore MORALITY, the other essential part of the Christian System, to its joint Rights, in the direction of the Faithfull. Hence, the encouragement the Church gave to those noble Discourses, which did such credit to Religion, in the licentious times of Charles the Second, composed by these learned and pious men, whom Zealots abused by the nick-name of LATITUDINARIAN DIVINES. But the reputation they acquired by so effectually suppressing these rank Seeds of Fanaticism, made their Successors ambitious of sharing with them in the same honours: And men have ever a vain passion for
4 improving

improving upon those who went before. The Church was now triumphant: The Sec-
taries were humbled: sometimes oppress-
ed; always regarded with an eye of jea-
lousy and aversion: till at length this
Gospel-principle of FAITH came to be
held by many for Fanatical: And those,
who understood its true Original, found
so much difficulty in adjusting the distinct
Rights of GRACE and MORALITY, that,
by the time this Century commenced,
things were come to such a pass, (MORA-
LITY was advanced so high, and FAITH so
frittered into nonsense) that a new definition
of our Religion, in opposition to its Found-
ers, and unknown to its early Followers,
was grown to be the fashionable tenet of the
times: And *Christianity*, which till now
had been understood as but co-eval with
REDEMPTION, was henceforth to be e-
steemed *as old as the CREATION*: an emi-
nent Divine, having, in a public Dis-
course, asserted, without circumstance or
restriction, that *Christianity was a repub-*
lication

lication of the Religion of Nature. Thus, between the two opposite Parties of Divines, we were left without either *natural* or *revealed* Religion. The one, we see, denied the very being of the *natural*; and the other assured us that the *revealed* was nothing else than that exploded non-entity.

This *Republication* had, in effect, been talked of before, by many others of equal reputation: but being now explained, and ready to be received as the established System, our Adversaries began to think it time to check so ridiculous a triumph; and to *discredit Religion*, which they have always done with much success, *on the Principles of its Defenders.* For, with the wanton Libertine,

——— “It is the sport, to see
“The Engineer hoist with his own Petar.”

And one of the Party, an Enemy, equally determined, to *Grace* and *Morality*,

lity; composed that famous Book, intituled, *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, to decry all *Revelation* whatsoever, on this very principle of a *Republication*; so unhappily conceived by modern Orthodoxy, as the surest way of evincing the *reasonableness* of the Gospel.

The like Advantage (to put things of a sort together, for the better illustration of the-Subject) had, about the same time, been taken of our indiscretions by another of these men; and as the reasoning of Tyndal was directed to depreciate the Work of REDEMPTION, so the argument of Collins was inforced to insult the Character of the REDEEMER. The general body of the PROPHECIES which relate to Jesus, were, for certain great ends of Providence, so contrived as to have a *primary* accomplishment in the events of the Mosaic Dispensation, and a *secondary* and final completion in the birth and ministry and sufferings of *Jesus the Messiah*. But the admirable contrivance of divine Wisdom, in giving to those Predictions a *primary* and a *secondary*.

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a *secondary* accomplishment, being either soon forgotten or generally over-looked, it produced large swarms of fanciful and fanatic Allegorists, who filled the Church with extravagant whimsies equally dishonourable to *Reason* and *Religion*. Amidst so thick a cloud of nonsense, the *logical propriety* as well as *moral fitness* of a *secondary sense*, in the Prophecies relating to Jesus, being swallowed up and lost, some bold and hasty men, ever least qualified to distinguish between the use and the abuse of a positive institution, ventured to condemn *all secondary senses*, as irrational and fanatical; and finding but few Prophecies which relate to the MESSIAH, in the *primary*, they were forced upon the desperate expedient of holding, that the Jews, or other Enemies of Christianity, had adulterated and corrupted the whole body of these Prophecies, as they stand at present in our Bibles. But no sooner had Mr. Collins got these rash Men at this advantage, than he insulted them with his discourse on *Grounds and Reasons of the Christian*.

Christian Religion: In which, he attempts to overthrow the Gospel on these two principles. 1st. That (by the confession of his Adversaries) a *secondary* sense of Prophecies is irrational and fanatical. And 2dly. That (that by the confession of all sober men) the Jews had not corrupted or adulterated their Bible. His conclusion is, that *Christian Religion* stands on no solid grounds or reasons; Jesus not having, as he pretended, been foretold under the Character of the MESSIAH of the Jews.—And here, let it be observed, that these Works of Tyndal and Collins, both rising on the advantage taken of our follies, are the two most artful and desperate attacks on Revelation, that were ever made since the time of Celsus and Porphyry.

I have attempted to give a good Account of Mr. Collins' *Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* elsewhere (3), by confuting his first Proposition, on which the whole attack stands, and by shewing the logi-

(3) Div. Legat. B. vi. § 5, 6.

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cal propriety and moral fitness of SECONDARY senses of Prophecy. I shall hereafter have occasion to do equal justice to Mr. Tyndal's *Christianity as Old as the Creation*. For the only effectual answer to both, as indeed to all others of the like kind (4), is

(4) The writings of Unbelievers abound with these attacks on Revelation, occasioned by the indiscretion of its Defenders. From amongst many, I shall select an instance or two, least like'y to give offence. The Advocates of the Church of Rome, to evade the charge of *Idolatry*, pretend that this crime consists in giving the worship due to the supreme God, to inferior Beings. To combat this subterfuge the excellent *Bp. Stillingfleet* attempted to prove, that the most civilized Pagans, who are confessed to be *Idolaters*, did not give the honours due to the first Cause, to their inferior Gods; the *first Cause*, as he pretends, being worshiped by them, as such: Which thing, if true, would contradict all that the Prophets and the Apostles say concerning the state and condition of the Pagan World.---Again, The very learned Dr. Prideaux, to do honour to his Exiled Jews, adopts, from Hyde and a rabble of lying Orientalists, the idle fable of a Philosophic Zoroaster, the subverter of

to renounce all fancifull Systems, and to keep inviolate the great principles of the *Mosaic Law* and the *Gospel of Jesus*; Principles which discover themselves, and indeed obtrude themselves upon us, on a carefull study of those two connected Dispensations.

But to go on with our subject, Tyndal's *Christianity as old as the Creation*.

This terrible advantage taken of a Principle, become fashionably orthodox, greatly alarmed all serious men; and the feeble Answers given to it, on that Principle, were so little satisfactory, that a com-

Idolatry in Persia; little attentive the while to the more plausible conclusion of Unbelievers, from the same fact; who pretend, that these Jews, so prone to Idolatry before their *Captivity*, were instructed there, by this Zoroaster, in a better Theology, which gave them just notions of the Divine Nature, and, consequently, of a Crime that, ever afterwards, they had in utter abhorrence. A conclusion pushed with great advantage by *Collins* and *Morgan* on the ground thus prepared by *Hyde*, and further smoothed for them by *Dr. Prideaux*.

F f

mendable

mendable effort was made, by some whose Stations supported them in the attempt, to bring back the slighted Doctrine of REDEMPTION, and to reinstate it in its ancient Credit. And a worthy B. of L. was amongst the first to repair the mischief, which the mistaken labours of his no less worthy *Successor*, had unwittingly occasioned. So that, in a little time, we regained much of the ground that had been lost, and replaced the national Faith once again on its old Gospel foundation, in spite of the silly pains of a very equivocal Divine, who published a Book in opposition to the returning Current, intitled *The Scripture doctrine of Redemption*, which was to prove that in reality there was no such thing; when the old puritan Fanaticism revived, under the new name of *Methodism*, and, as it spread, pushed once more, (as far as the difference of times would allow) those Gospel principles to their old abusive extremes.

This soon put a stop to the recovery
of

of that middle way, in which *Grace* and *Morality* are preserved in their respective rights: an unhappy disposition now appearing in several Opposers of this late revived fanaticism, to return back to the old *latitudinarian* excesses.

And now will come in (I hope, not improperly) the Caution, for the sake of which I have given this detailed account of our former miscarriages, to warn us against a repetition of them.

For these opposed doctrines of a *REDEMPTION* and a *REPUBLICATION* are not matters of so slight moment that either of them may be taken up, or laid down at pleasure; or just as we are pressed, on the one hand, by *Infidelity*, or, on the other, by *Fanaticism*.

The Doctrine of *REDEMPTION*, is the *primum mobile* of the Gospel System. To this the Church must steadily adhere, let the storm, against it, beat from what quarter it may. It is the first duty of the Ministers of Religion, to secure this great Foundation: They may then, with safety,

and not with the less success, push the Enemies of the Church, the Enemies of their Order, nay, even the Enemies of their own peculiar opinions, with all the force they are able; but ever, as we say, in subserviency to the EVERLASTING GOSPEL, whose main Pillar is this *Doctrine of Redemption*. — How essential a part it is of the Gospel-Æconomy, interpreted by God's general Dispensation, revealed to mankind, of which, the Gospel Æconomy is the completion; and how agreeable it is to what the best and most received Philosophy teacheth us, concerning the relations between the Creature and the Creator, shall be considered at large in its proper place (5).

What better suits the melancholy subject we are now upon, namely, the advantages given to the common Enemy by those who, to get rid of some urgent difficulty, are apt to forsake their foundations, will be to shew

the various and unthought of mischiefs which arise from the folly of attempting to change the nature of the Gospel-Economy from a *Redemption of Mankind* to a *Republication of the Religion of Nature*. A folly, by which the great Author of our Salvation becomes dishonoured, and the Christian Faith exposed to the perpetual insults of Libertines and Unbelievers.

1. For he who considers Jesus on'y in the light of a Republiher of the Law of Nature, can hardly entertain a higher opinion of the Saviour of the world than some have done of SOCRATES, whom Erasmus esteemed an object of devotion, and many a good Protestant has thought to be divinely inspired. For was not Socrates, by his preaching up moral virtue, and by his dying to bear witness to the unity of the Godhead, *made*, to the Grecian People, (and, by means of their extended commerce of politeness) to the rest of mankind, *wisdom and Righteousness*? And what more was Jesus? for, according to the principles of this paganized Christian-

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ity, his titles of MESSIAH and REDEEMER
are reduced to mere figurative and accom-
modated terms.

2. As this Theology degrades Jesus to
the low condition of a Grecian Sophist; so
it renders his Religion obnoxious to the in-
sults of every daring Impostor.

He was sent, say these new Doctors of
the Church, to teach mankind the worship
of the true God, and the practice of moral
righteousness (6).

" This will be readily allowed, replies
" an understanding MAHOMETAN: And
" on this very principle, we hold, that
" when Jesus had done his office; and

(6) A celebrated Frenchman, who writes on all
subjects, and, on all, with equal judgment and capaci-
ty, perhaps, knew better what he was about than
these Divines, when he went further, and affirmed
That Christianity is not only no more than the Reli-
gion of nature perfected, but that *it could not possibly*
be any more.--" *Nôtre Religion révélée n'est même,*
" et ne pouvoit être, que cette Loi naturelle per-
" sectionnée." *Discours sur le Theïsme, par M.*
de Voltaire.

“ mankind had again relapsed, into *anti-*
“ *christian* Idolatry and Polytheism, as be-
“ fore into *Pagan*, God sent our PRO-
“ PHET, who worked the like sudden and
“ sensible reformation in the NORTH-
“ EAST, as your Prophet did in the
“ NORTH-WEST.”

And this reply he makes on the very principles of his ALCORAN; which, (with professions of the highest veneration for the character of JESUS) denies his proper Divinity, and at the same time, his death on the cross. But why, it may be asked, was this aversion to the PASSION of One whom the Alcoran makes a Mortal? For this plain reason, *Mahomet*, who wanted the refinement of our modern *Accommodators*, plainly saw that the doctrine of REDEMPTION followed the *passion*, completed the *Scheme of Revelation*, and shut out all his bold pretences.

M. Otter,

M. Otter, an intelligent Frenchman of the Academy Royal of Inscriptions, &c. tells us of a conference he had with a learned Persian. The Mussulman said, They revered all our sacred writings except those of St. PAUL — *qu'ils respectent tous, excepté Saint Paul* (7). Why this exception? On the Mahometan Principle that *Christianity is only a republication of the Religion of Nature*: for St. PAUL is full of the doctrine of REDEMPTION; explains the Christian System by it, and makes the whole Faith depend upon it.

What now has our rational Republican to oppose to this modest Apology for Ismaelism?

All he has to say is this, “ That Jesus
“ and his Apostles have every where inti-
“ mated, that the *Gospel* is the last of
“ God’s Dispensations: on the terms of
“ which our final doom is to be
“ decided: so that all future Pretend-

(7) *Voyage en Turque et en Perse*, vol. i.
p. 22.

“ers to the like Office and Character must
“needs be esteemed Impostors.”

But here a DEIST would come in, to
take advantage of our distress; for (as we
have said more than once) it may be ob-
served alike of all these shifting defences on
fanciful, and unscriptural systems, that they
only supply new arms to the various Ad-
versaries of our Faith; a *Deist*, I say, would
be ready to reply, “That it is indeed true
“that Jesus hath declared his own Mission
“to be the LAST: but that this is the
“sly contrivance of every pretended
“Messenger from Heaven, in order to
“perpetuate his own Scheme, and to ob-
“viate the danger of an antiquated au-
“thority. The Impostor, MAHOMET
“himself hath done it. He, who here
“obtrudes his *armed* pretensions upon us,
“hath secured the duration of his sensual
“Religion by the very same expedient:
“A thing, in his ideas, so much of
“course, that he did not even object to
“Jesus’s use of it, who employed it
“before Him; and for no other pur-
“pose

" pose than to cut off all following pre-
 " tensions to the like Character. On
 " the contrary, He avowed and main-
 " tained the general truth of the Nazar-
 " ites Commission. Now (pursues the
 " Deist) a method employed by a con-
 " fessed Imposter is taken up with an ill
 " grace by the defender of true Religion.
 " But I draw a further consequence, (says
 " he) against the GOSPEL; from this re-
 " presentation of Christianity. For if the
 " preaching of moral truth and righteous-
 " ness were the whole of Jesus's Charac-
 " ter and Office, then his Mission did not
 " answer its end, the lasting reformation
 " of mankind, in the *knowledge of God*,
 " and in the *practice of Virtue*: since the
 " world soon fell back again into the state
 " from which JEWS had delivered it; as
 " appears from the history of the times in
 " which MAHOMET appeared, and the
 " advantages he made of that degene-
 " racy."

" Jesus's life of it, who completed it
 " and for no other
 " Thus

Thus subjected to the insults and injuries of all sorts of Impostors, who set themselves to delude the credulous, either by inventing new Revelations or by decrying the old, do these *Republisbers* expose the holy faith of JESUS: That faith which, we are told, was *founded on a rock*, impregnable to the assaults of Men and Demons, to the sophisms of Infidelity, and the prestiges of Imposture! And so, indeed, it is, if we will take it as we find it, if we will receive it as it came from above, if we will preserve it pure and entire as it was delivered to the Saints, under the idea of THE REDEMPTION OF THE WORLD BY THE SON OF GOD, IN THE VOLUNTARY SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF UPON THE CROSS.

This (8) secures the Character of JESUS from the insults of false Pretenders; and his GOSPEL from the injuries of false Reasoners.

(8) See *Div. Leg.* Book ix. where the conformity of this Doctrine to right reason and the nature of things is evinced at large.

For,

For, first of all, if JESUS did, indeed, *redeem* Mankind, and restore them to their lost Inheritance; the scheme and progress of Revelation is compleated: which beginning at the LAPSE, naturally and necessarily ends in the restoration and recovery of LIFE AND IMMORTALITY by the death and passion of our Lord. CHRISTIANITY considered in this view (and in this view only, does SCRIPTURE give it us to consider) soon detects all the artful pretences of imposture; and secures its own honour by virtue of its very Essence: the great scene of Providence being now closed, in a full completion of its one, regular, entire, and eternal purpose.

Secondly, if JESUS did indeed *redeem* mankind, then did he neither preach nor die in vain: it not being in man's power, with all his malice and perverseness, to defeat or make void the great purpose of his Coming. For though one part of his Mission was to instruct the world in *Wisdom* (9) and *Righteousness*, which it was

in man's power to forget and neglect; yet, what is chiefly essential in his Character, and peculiar to his Office, the *Sanctification* and *Redemption* of the World, man could not frustrate nor render ineffectual: For it is not in his power to make that to be undone which is once done and perfected.

The fastidious Caviller (10) therefore hath employed his pains to little purpose in attempting to discredit Revelation from this topic, *The moral state of the world, before and since the coming of Christ*. For, besides what one might venture to affirm that, when the comparison is fully and impartially scrutinized, the advantage will be found to lie on the side of our Religion; yet, supposing the Truths preached by Jesus, and the Assistance given by the holy SPIRIT, had not much improved the general morals of mankind; How does this tend to the discredit of the Gospel? unless it can be shewn that the Gospel hath

(10) Lord Bolingbroke.

no natural tendency to make men better. But this is so desperate an undertaking, that, I believe, Infidelity will hardly be persuaded to engage in it. Indeed the contrary is so true, that, (as I have shewn elsewhere) when you lay together the state of PAGAN and CHRISTIAN Morals, one manifest and essential difference is found between them; which is this, That in the Gentile world, men often acted wrong UPON PRINCIPLE; in the Christian, always AGAINST PRINCIPLE (1). Now, not to insist upon the necessary restraint this must needs be upon Vice; it plainly demonstrates the NATURAL TENDENCY of the Gospel to make men virtuous: And, to draw them by a stronger attraction, did not suit the genius of a rational Religion, whose object was free Agency.

But the proper answer to this idle cavil arises from the explanation given above. To Instruct the world in *Wisdom* and *Righteousness* was but the *secondary* end

(1) Div. Leg. B. iv. § 2.

of Christ's Mission. The FIRST and primary, was to become its SANCTIFICATION and REDEMPTION; *That* must needs be common to every Revelation coming from God; *This* is peculiar to the Christian: and *this*, as we have shewn, cannot possibly be frustrated, or rendered ineffectual.

To conclude from what hath been said: As we should not affect to pry into the nature of those things which God hath been pleased to withhold from our search, and to cover with the sacred veil of Mystery; so neither should we reject a truth, expressly delivered, because we may not fully comprehend all the reasons on which it stands. In a word, as we should not venture to go on where the silence of Scripture directs us to stop; so neither should we presume to stop where, with so loud a voice, it commands us to go on.

The sum of all then is this: REASON bids us to keep a MEAN: The great Philosopher informs us that NATURE is not

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able to keep it (1). What remains but that we fly to GRACE, which, the Apostle assures us, is able: for, *the Spirit helpeth our infirmities* (2). Nor will there be any danger (when, in such a temper, we apply to this *Guide of truth*) of abusing its credit by fanatical extremes; for, to *establiſh the heart with Grace*, the Apostle informs us is the only way to prevent our being *carried about with the divers and ſtrange Doctrines* (3) of Deceivers.

(1) *Natura modum tenere neſcia eſt.* BAC.

(2) Rom. viii. 26. (3) Heb. xiii. 9.

The E N D.

E R R A T A.

Pag. Lin.

21. 17. for, *inanimate* read, *irrational*
 72. 16. for, *knowledge* r. *the knowledge*
 85. ult. for, *Speech* r. *Speech of Characters*
 202. 20. for, *ſepiticism* r. *ſcepticism*
 235. 13. for, *ſealings* r. *feelings*
 246. ult. no ſtop after *Chriſtians*
 260. 8. the foregoing line, to the word *under-ſtood* in this, to be in a parentheſis
 270. 8. for, *dictates us* r. *dictates to us*
 302. 3. for, *to other* r. *to another*
 305. 1. for, *perfect* r. *perfected*
 311. for, *learning that, r. and point, learning; and that*
 309. 1. for, *their wit* r. *of their wit*



